

CHRIST'S CALL ⁽²⁾

TO THE

Rising Generation,

CONSIDER'D, IN

Three SERMONS

PREACH'D BY

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Minister of the Gospel at *Abernethy*.

Matth. xxi. 15, 16. *And when the chief Priests and Scribes
saw the wonderful Things that he did, and the Children
crying in the Temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son
of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him,
Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto
them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the Mouth of
Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise?*

Eccl. xii. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the Days of thy
Youth,-----*

Lam. iii. 27. *It is good for a Man that he bear the Yoke in
his Youth.*

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To the YOUNG PEOPLE of my own Congre- gation.

HAVING been directed, in the Course of my Ministry, to preach the Gospel of Christ to you from the Texts prefix'd to the following Sermons; I have taken this Method, to lay the Truths then delivered, before you, and others who may read these Discourses; that you may deliberately consider the Things which belong to your Peace, before they be hid from your Eyes. And, in transcribing my Notes, I have not closely adhered to the Periods of the Sermons as they were delivered in your Hearing; but have put the Substance of the Discourses in such a Form and Method, as I thought most proper for Edification, in reading the Sermons thus published: And, in transcribing, I have enlarged upon several Heads, and added others.

In these Discourses, I have not entred upon the Controversies of the Times, nor considered your Duty to bear Testimony to the Truths of Christ, to his Kingly Office, and all the other Branches of his Covenant'd Cause and Interest in this Land;

which is a Subject most useful and necessary to be handled in its own proper Place: But considering that it is needful you have some saving Acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, by Faith of the Operation of God, in order to your being faithful Witnesses for Christ, and holding fast the Word of his Patience; I have therefore endeavoured, through the Lord's Assistance, to lay the following plain and important Truths before you, from the Word of God: And may the Holy Spirit breathe upon them by his own Divine Influence, that through his Grace you may be brought to believe on the Son of God! And, if you believe in him with the Heart, you have Ground to expect that you shall be enabled by Grace, according to your Duty, to confess him with your Mouth.

I hope you will strive together, in your Prayers to God, that the Truths of God here delivered may be blessed to the Glory of God, and the spiritual Benefit of such as shall read them, and ponder them in their Hearts; and that the Promises made to our highest Lord Immanuel, and to us in him, may be now remarkably accomplished in the latter Days, that the Isles shall wait for his Law; that in his Name the Gentiles shall trust; and that his Name shall endure for ever; and upon his Head the Crown shall flourish!

Christ's



Christ's Call to the Rising Generation.

S E R M O N I.

Mark x. 14. *But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not: For of such is the Kingdom of God.*



WE have here the Welcome which Christ gave to some little Children that were brought unto him. In the preceeding Verse, it is said, *They brought young Children to him, that he should touch them; and his Disciples rebuked those that brought them.* We may suppose, they were their Parents that brought them: Others brought their Children to Christ, to be healed when they were sick; but these Children were under no present Malady, only they desired a Blessing for them. They brought them to him, that he might touch them; it is elsewhere said, that he might lay his Hands upon them, that is, that he might bestow a Blessing upon them. Thus *Jacob* put his Hands upon the Sons of *Joseph*, when he blessed them. The Disciples discouraged those that brought them; they thought

thought it would bring great Trouble to their Master, and therefore rebuked them.

But our Lord Jesus was much displeased with the Conduct of the Disciples, and encourageth the little Children to come unto him, and their Parents in bringing them. Those who come to Christ themselves, should bring all they have with them, and confidently expect a kindly Welcome from our Lord Jesus Christ. And they who are blessed in Christ themselves, should desire to have their Children blessed in him; and should testify the true Love they have for their Children, by a Concern about their Souls; and the Honour they have for the Lord Jesus, by devoting them to his Worship and Service. And we may present our Children to Christ now in Heaven, that he may touch their Hearts by his Spirit and Grace. And herein we may act Faith upon the Fulness and Freedom of the Grace of Christ, who has promised to pour his Spirit upon our Seed, and his Blessing upon our Offspring.

The Words contain a gracious Call and Invitation directed by Christ to the rising Generation, and a Direction to all with Reference thereto; *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not.* And here we may notice, 1. The glorious Person speaking, and inviting perishing Souls to himself; *Jesus said unto them; Suffer the little Children to come unto me.* Jesus said it, and you may trust his Word, little Children; Jesus, the Saviour of the World; Jesus, who saves his People from their Sins, has said it, that little Children, such as you are, are in his Commission, who came to

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to seek and to save that which was lost. 2. We may observe the Persons to whom this Gospel-call is directed; it is to you, who are little Children: *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not.* Let nothing be done to hinder them, for they shall be as welcome as any. Little Children, as soon as they are capable, ought to come to Christ; to come with their Prayers and Supplications to him, and to come to receive the Blessing from him. 3. We may notice, that the Call is laid down by Christ in the most encouraging Manner to the little Children: When the Disciples oppose them, he takes their Part, and gives them abundant Encouragement; *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not: For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Little Children have participated of Adam's first Sin, and of the malignant Influences thereof; and therefore our Lord doth make them welcome to partake of the Riches of the Grace of Christ, the Grace of the second Adam, and of that Righteousness which reigns unto eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord. He takes it ill at those who forbid them, and would excludethose whom he has received, and cast them out from the Inheritance of the Lord; and he tells his Disciples, that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The Children of believing Parents belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, and are Members of the visible Church; and to them pertain the Privileges of visible Church-membership, as among the Jews of old; for the Lord has said it, *I will be your God, and the God*

God of your Seed ; and Acts ii. 39. it is said, The Promise is unto you, and your Children.

From these Words, we may deduce the following Doctrinal OBSERVATION ;

That as the rising Generation have the greatest need of Christ, and of the Grace of Christ ; so, whatever Discouragements they may meet with in coming to Christ, yet they have abundant Encouragement from himself, who hath said it, Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

In discoursing this Doctrine, we shall endeavour, by Divine Assistance, 1. To show that the rising Generation have the greatest Need of Christ, and of the Grace of Christ. 2. To speak of some of those Discouragements that young People may meet with in coming unto Christ. 3. To speak of the heavenly Exercise the rising Generation are called and invited unto, namely, to come to the Lord Jesus in the Way of Faith and believing on him whom God hath sent. 4. To give an Hint at some of those Encouragements which the Lord Jesus hath given to the rising Generation to come unto him. And, 5. To make some Application of the Doctrine.

We proceed to the *first* Thing proposed, namely, To show that the rising Generation have the greatest Need of Christ, and of the Grace of Christ,

Rising Generation.

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The youngest of you are Sinners, and a Sinner needeth a Saviour; and Christ is the only Saviour, for there is no Salvation in any other. And, 1. The youngest of you are guilty of *Adam's first Sin*, *Rom. v. 12. Wherefore as by one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned*: Or, as it may be render'd, in whom all have sinned. And, *Rom. v. 19. For, as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one shall many be made righteous*. Thus you see, that you and all the Posterity of *Adam* are Sinners, by the Imputation of *Adam's first Sin*; even as all the Redeem'd from among Men are righteous, by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, their Head and Representative in the Covenant of Promise. In *Adam* all Mankind died, *1 Cor. xv. 22. because they all sinned in him; for the Wages of Sin is Death*. Infants are born under the Power of spiritual Death, and obnoxious to natural and eternal Death; and Death hath passed upon them and all Mankind, for that they all have sinned, *Rom. v. 12. that is, they sinned in Adam*; for they could not Sin in their own Persons, prior to their being born in Sin, and under the Sentence of Death, the proper Desert of Sin.

As Mankind was made upright, and after God's Image, *Eccl. vii. 29. so the Covenant was made with Mankind, not merely with the first Man as one Individual of the Species, but it was made with him as the federal Head and Representative of his Posterity*. His first Sin therefore was not merely the Sin of one Man,

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but the Insurrection of the whole human Nature against God. 'Tis true, the fallen Angels did every one of them act for themselves, and involv'd themselves in Sin and Misery : But it doth not therefore follow, that we could not be accessory to *Adam's* first Sin, because we were not present to give a formal personal Consent to what was done. Shall we poor Creatures take it upon us to prescribe to God himself, that he cannot take one Method of transacting with Angels, and another with Mankind ? It was a Thing equal in itself, to deal with Mankind in the Way of a Covenant and federal Representation ; and we may be assured it was the best Method, seeing a God of infinite Wisdom and Goodness transacted with us in that Manner. If *Adam* had stood, and his Posterity had thus in him been confirmed in a State of Happiness, the whole human Race had applauded it, and praised God for it. It was therefore a Transaction good and equal in itself ; and, if Men of corrupt Principles object against it, they only discover the Corruption of their Hearts, by replying against God ; and they may consider how unfit they are to judge in a Matter wherein they are so much Parties themselves, and with what Veneration they ought therefore to receive what God himself has revealed concerning this Matter in his Word. Had all Mankind been in Paradise, they could not have declined it, that God should transact with them in the Way of a federal Representation. None could have been more fit to have represented *Adam's* Posterity than himself. Mankind had a surer Prospect of Happiness by the good Management of one, the

Rising Generation.

II

the fittest of Mankind to act for the rest, than if every one had been left to act a Part for himself; unless we suppose, that some of *Adam's* Posterity would have been fitter to act a good Part for their own personal Interest, than *Adam* was to act a wise Part for his own Sake, and for the Sake of all Mankind his Descendents. None of them could have had better Abilities than *Adam*, and none of them could have had such strong Motives to exert them as the common Parent of Mankind, who, beside his personal-Interest, was made the Trustee and Representative of his Race and Posterity.

The youngest of you, yea all Mankind, are guilty of *Adam's* first Sin. The inspired Writer, *Ecccl. vii. 29.* giving an Account of the Origin of all the Sin, Misery and Vanity that now takes place among Mankind, he lodges the Fault and Blame of all, not upon one Man, but upon the whole Race of Mankind: *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made Man upright; but they have sought out many Inventions.* God made Man upright; not merely one Man, but he made Mankind, the human Nature upright, in the first Original of it: And *they* (that is, the human Race, as represented by the first Man) made Apostasy from God, and sought out many Inventions. Instead of resting in what God had found for them, they sought to mend themselves; and the Law of their Creation could not hold them, but they would be at their own Disposal, and follow their own Sentiments. To the same Purpose, God saith to *Israel*, and in them to all Mankind, *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy Help.* And

how great and inexcusable was this Sin of the human Race ! Man had an easy Law to obey ; and as the moral Law was of undoubted Excellency, so was the positive Law likewise : For it was for Man's Safety, that he had one Tree forbidden ; that he might know, that he as the Vassal held all of God his Superior ; so that, when all the Creatures were subject to him, he might remember that he was still subject to God. This forbidden Tree was a Memorial to him of his mutable State, which was to be laid up by him for his greater Caution : For Man was created with a Free-will to Good, which the Tree of Life was an Evidence of ; but his Will was mutable to Evil, and the forbidden Tree was to him a Memorial thereof : It was in a Manner a continual Watch-word to him against Evil. And the forbidden Tree taught *Adam*, that his Happiness did not ly in enjoying Creatures, for there was a Want in Paradise : It was therefore in Effect the Hand of all the Creatures, pointing Man away from themselves to God for Happiness ; and it was like unto a Sign of Emptiness lifted up on the Door of the Creation, with this Inscription, *This is not your Rest*. So that, upon the whole, Man's Ruin was most evidently owing to himself ; *Man being in Honour continued not, but became as the Beasts that perish*.

The youngest of you have the greatest Ground to be humbled before God for this, that you are guilty of *Adam's* first Sin. And, if you look into your own Hearts, ye will see the Features of the first *Adam's* Face, the very Lineaments of his first Sin, in the Complexion of

of your own Souls. His Posterity are infected with his sinful Curiosity, (*Gen. iii. 6.*) they are more concerned to know new Things, than to practise known Truths. *Vain Man would be wise, tho' he be born like the wild Ass's Colt.* They are ready to hearken to the *Instruction that causeth to err.* The Eyes of their Head often blind the Eyes of their Mind; and they are too much inclin'd to care for the Body at the Expence of the Soul. And how much are we inclin'd, with *Adam*, to hide our Sin, or to extenuate it, and to transfer the Guilt of it upon others? And, seeing the Sin of the first *Adam* is imputed to you, you can no otherwise be saved but by the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to the Justification of Life: And therefore every one of you have the greatest Need of Christ, and of the Grace of Christ, even of that Grace which *reigns through Righteousness unto eternal Life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

2^{dly}, The youngest of you have an infinite Need of Christ; for you have lost the Image of God, *Rom. iii. 19.* You want that original Righteousness which *Adam* had; that Knowledge of God, of his Law, and of his Will; that Holiness of Affections, and that Conformity of Will to the divine Law, which human Nature was endued with at its first Creation: And, having lost the Image of God, you have thereby lost your Immortality, and are become subject to Death. Man, at his Creation, was a Freeholder of Heaven; but now, by Sin, you are enslaved to your Corruptions. You have lost that Calm and Serenity of Conscience, which was the Blessing of Man's primitive State; and now

now you have an accusing Conscience, and a Storm is raised in your Breast. You have lost that Love to God, and Delight in him, which *Adam* had, and that filial Dependence upon him as a God and Father. You have lost all Will and Power to that which is spiritually good; and you are lost as to the very End of your Creation, which was to see God in all his Works, to gather in the Revenue of his Praise from all the inferior Creatures, and to hand it up to him, and be the Mouth of this lower Part of the Creation, by worshipping and praising God upon the Earth, as the Angels do in Heaven.

The youngest of you, then, have an infinite Need of Christ, who restored that which he took not away, *Psal. lxix. 4.* He restored Glory to God, and Honour to his Law; and he only can restore the Image of God to Man, and bring Man into Favour with God.

3dly, The youngest of you stand in the greatest Need of Christ; for your Natures are corrupted, and you are carnal and altogether sinful. You are morally unclean, and your Natures are polluted, *Job xiv. 4.* for, *who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? no, not one.* And the Psalmist doth acknowledge his original Corruption, *Psal. li. 5.* *Behold, I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me †:* And our Lord hath determined it, *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh*, *John iii. 6.* Man, considered in his corrupted State, is here called *Flesh*; because the unrenewed Man is fleshly and carnal even in his most religious Performances,

† See these Texts explained and vindicated, in the Review of Mr. Campbell's Principles.

mances, and is carried out wholly by the Principle of Flesh within him. In supernatural Mysteries he is blind and carnal, *1 Cor. ii. 14.* so that Flesh and Blood cannot reveal them to us, but the Father, *Mat. xvi. 17.* and this fleshly Mind doth move and operate powerfully in Atheists and Hereticks. And he is carnal in his Performances, because, when he doth them, it is not from Love to God, to exalt and honour him; but out of Love to himself, to avoid some Judgment or other. God takes notice of the Corruption of your Nature, *Gen. vi. 5. Psal. xiv. 2, 3.* and maketh it ly heavy upon the Consciences of his own People in their new Birth; and while they are in this Life they are exercised with a daily Conflict with it: You ought therefore to take notice of it, and be humbled for it. Your Mind is clouded and filled with spiritual Darkness, *Eph. v. 8.* you see not the Beauty and Glory of Christ, nor the Vileness of Sin. And that your Understandings are corrupted, doth appear from the Vanity of your Minds, and the Swarms of vain Thoughts which do lodge within you; and from your spiritual Folly, that you prefer the worst Things to the best; that you prefer a Creature to God, Earth to Heaven, and the Body to the Soul; and that you mind only the present Time, and forget Eternity and the World to come.

And your Will is corrupted in its Powers, in so far that it is not only weakned, but disabled to Duty. There is in your Will an Aversness to Good, and a Proneness to Evil, *Jer. xiii. last. Hos. ii. 7.* and there is in your Will an Obstinacy and Contumacy against God, so that you are wilful

wilful in an evil Course, and refuse to be reclaimed, *Jer. viii. 6. Prov. viii. 36. Ezek. xviii. 31.* Your Will is corrupted and perverse in reference to your great and ultimate End; for the natural Man seeks not God and his Glory for his highest End, but himself, *Psal. xiv. 2, 3. They are all gone aside.* Thou art gone aside from God as thy Rest, and as thy last End. All Things are from God, and therefore all Things ought to be directed to God and to his Glory; but, turning aside from God to the Idol of Self, thou hast usurped the Throne of God, and hast gathered in the Rents of his Crown to thy self. And this is thy Case whilst thou art an unrenewed Man; thou art wholly enslaved to Sin, and canst do nothing but Sin; hence the natural Man is compared to an evil Tree, that can bring forth nothing but evil Fruit.

Your Memory is corrupted; for you remember what you ought to forget, and forget what you ought to remember. You forget God's Word and his Works; you forget God's Mercies and Rods; you forget yourselves, and your Sins; you forget your Convictions, and the Working of God's Spirit upon your Hearts; and forget God himself, his Grace and Love manifested in Christ Jesus, *Isa. lvii. 11. Thou hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy Heart:* And therefore are you so propense to all Manner of Evil; whereas the Remembrance of God would be an excellent Antidote against all Sin.

And your Conscience is defiled, *Tit. i. 15.* There is a Darkness and Vail upon it; whereas if the Candle of the Lord were lighted, thou wouldst

wouldst be amazed at thyself, and at thy Condition. Thy Conscience by Sin is become senseless and stupid, hence is called a *seared Conscience*: And, if Conscience at some Times endeavours to exert itself, it is but weakly and faintly; Conscience is too weak for Corruptions, like *Balaam* they will press forward to their Wickedness, tho' Conscience stand like an Angel with a Sword in his Hand to stop the Way.

And your Affections are corrupted, in that they are placed and fixed upon wrong Objects; they were given to Men to be Wings to their Souls in their Motions after God, but now they are become Clogs and Impediments to us in our Approaches to God. And so corrupted are your Affections, that they have usurped a Dominion over your Understanding, so that you judge as you affect, and not as Matters are; hence you have drawn false Conclusions about the State and Condition of your own Soul, as if it were safe, when you may well know that it is very bad.

You have Ground to be humbled for your Pollution by original Sin; for original Sin is the most diffusive Sin: Other Sins are like particular Sores, but this is the Gangrene of the whole Body; the Understanding, the Will and the Affections are all defiled and infected with it: All other Sins are like the Streams, but this is the Fountain; this is the flaming Furnace in the inward Man, and your actual Sins as so many Sparks of Hell do flash forth from that burning Lake within. And by it you are in a most deplorable Condition, so that you are not capable to feel your sad Condition, nor to get out of it,

or return to God from whom you have revolted, till sovereign Grace interpose for your Relief. Know therefore the desperate Wickedness of thy Heart, *Jer. xvii. 9. Psal. xix. 13.* A Man's Heart is like Peter's great Sheet, *Acts xi. 6.* which was full of four-footed Beasts and creeping Things, all unclean. Look inward, and you will find, that your sinful Words and Actions, tho' very dishonouring to God in themselves, are yet nothing to the Sea of Corruption within you, where you cannot reach the Bottom. And as you are Children of Disobedience, so you are Children of Wrath, *Eph. ii. 3. And were by Nature Children of Wrath as well as others.* You are *by Nature*, that is, by original Sin, which is now natural to you; by it you are *Children of Wrath*, that is, you are worthy of Wrath, liable to it, and under it: Wrath is your Heirship, and you are born to Wrath, as you are the Children of the first *Adam*.

We say, Considered in yourselves, you are liable to the Wrath of God; for you have sinned and come short of the Glory of God; and the Lord hath said it, *The Soul that sinneth shall die.* And you have broken God's Law: Now, thus saith the Lord, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them.* Let us consider, that Wrath has gone as wide as ever Sin went. When Angels sinned, Wrath brake in upon them as a Flood, *2 Pet. ii. 4.* And, when *Adam* sinned, the whole Lump of Mankind was leavened, and bound over to the fiery Oven of God's Wrath and vindictive Justice: All Men and Women are under this Wrath; the

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Gentiles, that know not God, are under it, *Rom. ii. 12.* And you who are young Ones are under this Wrath of God; you were born under it, but will make yourselves twofold more so if you do not flee from this Wrath, by fleeing in to Jesus Christ, who hath delivered us from the Wrath to come: And there needeth not be a surer Mark of your being under this Wrath, than that you never saw yourself to be under it, *Isa. xxvii. 11. 2 Thess. i. 8. Hos. 4. 6.* And no outward Privileges can exempt you from this State of Wrath: Tho' you be descended of godly Parents, and can say, *We have Abraham to our Father*; and tho' you have been baprized, and admitted to Church-privileges; yet are you *Children of Wrath as well as others.* There is Wrath upon your Body, it is a Piece of cursed Clay; and there is Wrath upon your Soul, so that you can have no Communion with God, while in a natural unconverted State, *Psal. v. 5. Eph. ii. 12.* There is Wrath upon all your Enjoyments, upon your Basket and upon your Store, *Deut. xxviii. 17.* and thou hast no Security for a Moment from the Wrath of God coming on thee to the uttermost: And in a little, and thou knowest not how soon, Death will be a dreadful Messenger unto you; it will come armed with Wrath, and put a Charge and Summons in thy Hand, to bid an eternal Farewell to all Things in this World, and to appear before the Tribunal of God, and go to another World, where thou wilt have no Portion but a Treasure of Wrath for evermore. It is in Hell, that the full Floods of this Wrath go over the Prisoners for ever; for it will be

their sad and dreadful Condition, to be separated from the Presence of the Lord, and to depart from Jesus Christ, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, where their Worm will not die, and their Fire shall never be quenched. Thus, by original Sin, as well as actual Transgressions, you are Children of Wrath; and, unless your Nature be changed by the renewing Grace of God, you must ly to all Eternity under this Load of Divine Wrath, and be *punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.* We might likewise tell you of your sinful Condition by your actual Sins; your Disobedience to your Parents, your Sabbath-breaking, your neglecting of secret Prayer Morning or Evening; your Lying, and taking of the Name of God in vain; for the Sake of which Things the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Disobedience: And we might likewise warn you of your perishing Condition by reason of your Sin of Unbelief, and the Need you have of the Spirit of Christ *to convince you of Sin, because you believe not in the Lord Jesus Christ,* John xvi. 8, 9. By this Sin of Unbelief, Christ is despised and rejected by you, and you *see no Form nor Comeliness in him why he should be desired by you,* tho' he be truly the *Desire of all Nations, and more excellent than all the Mountains of Prey.* And you need not think to despise the Love of the Father, the Blood of the Son of God, and the Promises of the Gospel at an easy Rate; for *Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

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But we proceed to the *second* Thing proposed, namely, To mention some of those Discouragements that young People may meet with in coming unto Christ. And,

1st, Some of you, who are the rising Generation, may be discouraged in coming unto Christ, from the Temptations of *Satan*, tempting you to delay this blessed Work of coming unto Christ, and believing on the Son of God; secretly suggesting this Thought, That it is soon enough for you to come to Christ: But you are called to come to Christ; *The Master is come, and calleth for you by Name*; and, if you sit this Call, you may never get another. There are young Sprigs, as well as old Logs, burning in the Flames of Hell; and there are Graves in the Church-yard, just of your Length. Or, perhaps, you are tempted to Security: When the Lord visited you with the Rod and Affliction, you then poured out a Prayer, and came under many Resolutions; but, when the Blast of Trouble is over, you are now following your old Course. But, beware of despising the Lord's Warnings: By these very Troubles, Christ giveth so many Knocks at the Door of thy young and sinful Heart; and, after all the Refusals you have given him, yet he standeth and knocketh, saying, *Behold, I stand at the Door and knock; and if any Man open to me, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me*, Rev. iii. 20. Or, you are tempted to Despair: But consider, that *Christ is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him*; that the Mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, is great unto the Heavens; and that he has proclaimed

claimed his Name, *The Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* Or possibly you are tempted to think hardly of the Lord's Way, and of his Yoke as burdensom and uneasy: But know it for a certain Truth, that *Wisdom's Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace:* And, tho' the Hearts of the Children of Zion may know their own Bitterness, yet *a Stranger doth not intermeddle with their Joy.*

2dly, Some of you may be discouraged, in coming unto Christ, by carnal Friends and Relations that endeavour to divert you from following the Lord: But the best that ever lived have had Trials of this Sort; but the Lord Jesus giveth Power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might he increaseth Strength; and they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their Strength, they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall walk and not weary, they shall run and not faint.

3dly, You may perhaps be discouraged, from Fears of falling away in the Time of Trial: But trust in the Lord at all Times, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength: And thus you shall be among the Preserved in Christ Jesus; you shall be kept by the Power of God, thro' Faith, unto Salvation; and be delivered from every evil Work, and preserved to his heavenly Kingdom. The Lord has said it, and faithful is he who hath promised, *Zech. x. 12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his Name, saith the Lord.*

4thly, Some of you may be discouraged from

a Sense of your own Sinfulness and Unworthiness: But know, that *worthy is the Lamb who was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation.* The Voice of Angels is heard round about the Throne, saying with a loud Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.* And you are warranted to trust his Promise who hath said it, *Your Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord: And, Men shall be blessed in him, and all Nations shall call him blessed,* Psal. lxxii. 17. Are any of you discouraged from the Greatness of your Sin? Then know, that Christ is the great God our Saviour, and that he hath proclaimed his Name, saying, *It is I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save,* Isa. lxiii. 1, 2. Or, are you discouraged from the Power of your Corruptions? Then take Encouragement from his own Word of Promise, Rom. vi. 14. *Sin shall not have Dominion over you: For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.* And, Mic. vii. 19. *He will subdue our Iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their Sins into the midst of the Sea: Thou wilt perform the Truth to Jacob, and the Mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn to our Fathers in the Days of old.*

We proceed now, in the *third Place*, to speak of the heavenly Exercise which the rising Generation are called and invited unto, viz. to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, by believing on him whom God hath sent.

ist, then, Your coming to the Lord Jesus supposeth, that there is a Call directed to you from a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, inviting you to come, to come to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the Blood of sprinkling that speaketh better Things than that of *Abel*. *1 John iii. 23. And this is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ. Mat. xi. 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest. Rev. xxii. 17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the Waters of Life freely.*

2dly, It supposeth, that there is Room in the Love of God, in the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in God's Covenant of Promise, for your Welcome and Reception who are the rising Generation, *Luke xiv. 22. And yet there is Room. John vi. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

Young Ones, you may be verily perswaded that Christ calleth you by Name, *Prov. viii. 17. I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.* Christ is a public Blessing; for God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. And, as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so was the Son of Man lifted up; that whosoever believeth on him should

should not perish, but have eternal Life. As all the Congregation of Israel had a good Right and a Warrant from God to look to the Serpent lifted up, and be healed; so all that hear the Gospel, and particularly you who are the rising Generation, have the Call and Command of God to look unto Christ and be saved, who is the *Salvation of God to the Ends of the Earth*. You have all Access to this Tree of Life which groweth in the Midst of the Paradise of God, the *Leaves whereof* are for the healing of the Nations; and there is no Cherubim, nor flaming Sword, to hinder your Approach unto it. Take a View of the encouraging Promises; it is the Voice of them all, Come and welcome to Jesus Christ. Thro' the whole Gospel, Christ never once made an Objection to any that came to him with their Sinfulness or Unworthiness; but all his Complaints are of their Backwardness and Unwillingness to come to him, that they might have Life, and have it more abundantly, *John v. 40*. The vilest Sinners that ever were, when they came to him, were made welcome; *Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, and Paul* who had persecuted the Church of God. Consider, young Ones, that it was the great Design of the Covenant, that Sinners such as you are might have the Benefit of a Saviour, *Isa. lxi. 1*. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the Meek, he hath sent me to bind up the Broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound.* Consider with what Pleasure the Lord Jesus undertook the Work of

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your Redemption, and with what Cheerfulness he went through that Work and Labour of Love; *Psal. xl. 7, 8.* he saith, *Lo, I come*; or, *I hasten to come*: And, when he is come, he saith, *It is my Meat and Drink to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish the Work which the Father gave me to do*; viz. by pouring out his Soul unto Death, and making it an Offering for Sin, that we might receive Forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified by Faith in his Blood. Consider likewise, that it is the End of all the Ordinances that you may come unto Christ and be saved; For what saith the Word? but that thro' Jesus is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins. What say Ministers? *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's Stead be ye reconciled unto God. For he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him*. And what saith the Sacrament? *This is the new Testament in my Blood, shed for the Remission of Sins unto many; drink ye all of it*. Our Lord Jesus doth feed in the Gardens, and he gathers Lilies. The Day of the Sinner's closing with him, is the Day of the Gladness of his Heart. And that blessed Time wherein the Soul is determined to come to Christ, is that very Hour wherein he rejoiceth in Spirit, and, seeing the Travail of his Soul, he is satisfied. His Forbearance with Sinners, and the Welcome they get when they come, discover abundantly his Grace and Good-will towards Men. He accepts of a weak Mint and Essay at coming to him, even of a
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Look, or the breathing out of the Desires of the Soul after himself as the Desire of all Nations. He is most pressing and earnest in bearing home the Calls and Offers of his Grace. How long-suffering is he, and with what Patience doth he wait? even *till his Head be filled with Dew, and his Locks with the Drops of the Night.* Our Lord Jesus is much weightied with it, when Sinners will not come to him; it is accounted by him an affronting him, and a treading the Blood of the Covenant under Foot: It drew Tears from his Eyes, and he wept bitterly over *Jerusalem*, because, like many of you, they knew not the Things that belong to their Peace. The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World, you may therefore trust him with your Salvation; and, seeing you are Sinners of *Adam's House*, you are therefore warranted to intrust your Souls with him upon his own Call in the Word, whose Name is called JESUS, *because he saveth his People from their Sins.* And thus you see, that you who are the rising Generation are called to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb, and may expect a gracious Reception from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

3dly, Your coming unto Christ implieth in it, that the powerful Efficacy of Divine Grace is exerted in renewing you in the Spirit of your Minds, and making you willing in the Day of the Mediator's Power, *Psal. cx. 3. Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* And, *John vi. 44. No Man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him.*

ably, Your coming unto Christ implieth in it a Conviction of your sinful and lost Condition, as you are Children of the first *Adam*; that you are Children of Wrath, and that your Iniquities do separate betwixt God and you; that you are Fatherless and Orphans, and cannot help yourselves by your Prayers, Duties or Righteousness; and that you can have Relief no otherwise but in him in whom the Fatherless do find Mercy, *Hos. xiv. 3.* The Light of the Spirit of God in Conviction is like unto the Light of the Sun, making all Things appear as they really are; but many see their Sin and perishing Condition only by Discourse: But, when the Spirit of God is bringing a Soul to Christ, he fixeth the vain Mind of a Sinner upon the due Consideration of Sin in its Nature, Tendency and End, *John xvi. 8, 9.* and he discovers to the Soul the real Greatness of Sin, by manifesting the real Greatness of God against whom it is committed, *Hos. iv. 4. Isa. vi. 3.* by giving realizing Views of the Justice of God, who will by no Means clear the Guilty; of the infinite Majesty of God, *Job xxxvii. 22.* and of the Holiness and Purity of God, who hateth all the Workers of Iniquity: Hence the convinced Sinner is pierced with perplexing Grief, and is made to despair of any Deliverance by the Law or the first Covenant, and is made to enquire into the Way of Relief by Christ in the Gospel, and to pant after that Salvation that is in him, from present Distress and future Misery, *Acts ii. 37.*

5thly, Your coming unto Christ implieth in it your coming to him as the great God your Saviour,

viour, and as the Lord your Righteousness; And your believing on him, and receiving him as offered to you in the Gospel, as your Saviour and Redeemer; it is to believe the Report of the Gospel, that Christ is the *Messiah*, the Mercy promised to the Fathers; that he is the Saviour of the World; and that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God: And that Christ is given of God to you in the Gospel; for this is God's Record, *that he hath given to us eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son; He that hath the Son hath Life.* God giveth his Son to you, to be received by you, with a particular Application to your own Souls Case and Exigencies: Christ is exhibited in the Word, as the great Propitiation, to be received by you in particular, upon the Warrant of the free Call and encouraging Promise of the Gospel. As Conviction is particular, *Thou art the Man*, saith the Spirit; so the Application of Faith is particular, tho' it be sometimes accompanied with a small Degree of sensible Comfort, *Isa. xlv. 24.*

6thly, Your coming unto Christ, implieth in it your being espoused and betrothed to him, as the one Husband raised from the Dead, in a Marriage-covenant; *Ye are become dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the Dead,* Rom. vii. 4. *And I will betrothe thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Loving-kindness, and in Mercies: I will even betrothe thee unto me in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord,* Hos. ii. 19, 20. The Soul going forth, and beholding King Solomon with the Crown

Crown upon his Head in the Day of his Espousals, cometh to the Marriage of the King's Son, to be betrothed to him for ever ; and the Soul's Motion to Christ is the Fruit of God's Promise of betrothing Souls to himself in Loving-kindness and in tender Mercies. You are thus, through Grace, to come to, and trust in, the Lord Jesus for your All of Righteousness and Strength ; to devote yourselves to him ; to love the Name of the Lord, and to serve him ; to come with him from *Lebanon*, to look to him from the Top of *Amana* and *Hermon*, from the Lions Dens, the Mountains of the Leopards ; and to take him for your All of Consolation, who is the Consolation of *Israel*.

We proceed now, in the *fourth* Place, to speak of some of thole Encouragements which the Lord Jesus hath given unto the rising Generation to come unto him. And,

1st, The full and ample Call of Christ in the Gospel is most encouraging to engage poor Sinners to come unto Christ, and particularly to encourage the rising Generation to come unto him ; *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not.* The Call is directed to all the Sons of Men, and giveth them a good Warrant to come, *Prov. viii. 4. To you I call, O Men, and my Voice is to the Sons of Adam.*

2dly, The Promise of Grace, and of Strength to enable you to come, is a noble Encouragement to come to Jesus Christ, *Psal. xxii. 30, 31. A Seed shall serve him. — They shall come, and shall declare his Righteousness unto a People that shall be born, and that he hath*
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done this. And the Promise of Welcome to all that come, is most encouraging, *John vi. 37. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*: Or, as the Word may be rendered, Him that is a-coming unto me (that is, but essaying to come) I will in no wise cast him out.

3dly, That God is most glorified by those that come to Christ, is encouraging to come; and that God has condescended to gather in to himself the Revenue of his Glory from the Salvation of Sinners by Christ Jesus, *Eph. ii. 6, 7.* is a most comfortable Encouragement, and sure Warrant for Sinners to come to Christ; seeing, in this Method of Salvation by him, there is *Glory to God in the Highest*, as well as *Peace on Earth and Good-will towards Men*, *Luke ii. 14.* And that very Moment you come to Christ, you put the Crown upon his Head, and ascribe Glory unto him; and his Glory to all Eternity shall be great in your Salvation, *Psal. xxi. 25.* That Moment you fall in with God's great and highest Design of creating all Things, and upholding them to this very Day, which is, that the Burden of the Praise of *Immanuel* might be lifted up, and that to the Ages to come he might shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace in his Kindness toward you thro' Christ Jesus; and you put in your Note in a Consort with the Angels, and the Redeemed from amongst Men, in celebrating the Grace of Christ, and that Salvation he hath wrought, and the Glory of God manifested therein: And that Moment you come to Christ, there is a Shout and a Song among the Angels of God; for *there is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth.*

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4thly, God the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World, *John iv. 15.* And this is a sure Warrant and good Encouragement for you to come unto Christ, and to believe on him as the Saviour of the World. This World had been the very Suburbs of Hell, upon the Entrance of Sin, if the Son of God had not been sent to be the Saviour of the World; and God had never received any Thing more of a Revenue of Glory from this lower World, if the Son had not been sent to be the Saviour of the World. But, behold, *the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*; and there is a Shout among the Seraphims, that *the whole Earth is full of his Glory*, *Isa. vi. 3.* because God had more Glory from the Obedience of his eternal Son, than from the Obedience of all the Hosts of Angels since ever the World began. The Lord Jesus is the great High Priest taken from among Men, and ordained for Men, in Things pertaining to God; and in the Nature of Man he finished this Work of our Redemption; and therefore every Man that hears this everlasting Gospel is warranted to come unto him, and to trust in him with a full Confidence of Faith to obtain Salvation by him, who is the Saviour of the World.

5thly, It is encouraging to you to come to Jesus Christ, that, when poor Sinners come unto him, *he seeth the Travail of his Soul, and is satisfied*, *Isa. liii. 11.* He had sore Travail of Soul by the Sword of Justice awakning against him, that it might be quiet as to you; he had sore Travail of Soul by the Hidings of his Father's Face, and drinking of the Brook in the Way, *that*

that Torrent of vindictive Wrath which interposed betwixt you and the City of God. But, so to speak, he reckons himself well rewarded, and is satisfied, for all the sore Travail of his Soul in the Garden of *Gethsemane* in his Agony, and upon the Cross in *Calvary*, in his being through his whole Life a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief; when he seeth the rising Generation coming to him for Life, for Righteousness, and Strength; and seeth you coming to God, through him, as to thy Rest, Portion, and everlasting Blessedness.

We now proceed to make some Application of this Doctrine; and that, by addressing ourselves, *first*, To the present Generation: *Secondly*, To the rising Generation.

1. then, We would exhort you, who are the present Generation, to imitate the Example laid before you in our Text, by bringing your Children and the rising Generation to Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new Covenant.

And, in order to this, you would be concerned to have some Knowledge of Christ, and Acquaintance with him yourselves: Like these Parents here spoken of, you must have some Love to Christ, and an Esteem of the Grace of Christ, and an Expectation of a gracious Reception from him. These People here spoken of, they believed that Christ was both able and willing to help them; they came to Christ themselves, and brought their Children, their best Things, with them as an Offering unto him. They had been with him, we may suppose, in some Mount *Tabor* of Manifestation,

and found that it was good to be there; and therefore thought it was best to have their Children there likewise. Imitate their Example likewise in this, that they had first a Concern about their own Souls, and then were deeply concerned about the Souls of their Children; and in that they were perswaded it would be well with the Souls of their Children if they were Christ's, and no Way else: And therefore they devoted both themselves and their Children to the Lord Jesus, in whom alone the Families of the Earth shall be blessed.

Let this be your Exercise, to bring your Children to Christ, that they may obtain *the Blessing from the Lord, and Righteousness from the God of our Salvation*; for by Nature they are Children of Wrath, and under the Curse. Bring them to him for Instruction, that your Children may be all taught of the Lord; and great shall be the Blessedness and Peace of your Children. Bring them to him for Salvation and Redemption; for he is a living Redeemer. Bring them to him for Quickning and Spiritual Life; for they are dead in Trespases and Sins, and Christ is the Resurrection and the Life. Bring them unto him, that their Persons may be justified, and their Natures sanctified; for he is *made of God unto us Sanctification*, and *in him all the Seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory*.

Consider the Marks and Characters of such who may expect to succeed in bringing their Children to Christ. And, 1. Such as make an acceptable Offering of them to the Lord, they bring them to Christ as the Altar of Acceptance,
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Isa. lvi. 7. Their Burnt-offerings and their Sacrifices shall be accepted on mine Altar.

2. They are importunate with the Lord for his Grace and Help; they are humble and self-denied, and after seeming Repulses wait patiently on for an Answer of Peace, *Matth. xv. 22, 24, 25, 28. And, behold, a Woman of Canaan cried unto him, saying, Have Mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my Daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil: But he answered her not a Word. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me: But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the Childrens Bread and to cast it to Dogs. And she saith, Truth, Lord, yet the Dogs eat of the Crumbs which fall from the Master's Table. Then Jesus answered, and said unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith: Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* 3. They maintain honourable Thoughts of Christ, and they believe and trust to his Word of Grace and Promise, *John iv. 50. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy Son liveth. And the Man believed the Word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way: And himself believed, and his whole House.*

But it may be for a Lamentation, that many of us, instead of bringing our Children to Christ, have provoked the Lord to leave both ourselves and the rising Generation; (1.) By Stoutness of Heart, in not being humbled for our original Sin, that both we and our Children sinned in the first *Adam*, that we have lost the Image of God, and that our Natures are universally corrupted. (2.) By our Ignorance of Christ; for,

had we attained to more Acquaintance and Communion with him, we might have spoken of him as of a Friend and an Acquaintance to our Children. (3.) By our Unbelief, rejecting many an Offer of Christ, and distrusting the Promise given to us and to our Children, *Acts* ii. 39. (4.) By our Carnality and Worldly-mindedness, that little of Christ was to be seen about us either in our Words or Actions: And by our Formality in our Closets and Family-duties, that, if we had been spiritual and lively, might have transmitted a Savour of Christ to our Children and to others about us.

But let the present Generation be excited to this necessary Duty of bringing the rising Generation to Christ, from a Consideration of the Encouragements the Lord hath given to you in his Word. Consider, that as the Promise is to you and to your Children, so these who have brought their Children to the Lord, have met with a gracious Reception: Thus, when *Hanna* dedicated *Samuel* to the Lord, her Offering was accepted. Consider, the Lord has promised to pour his Spirit upon your Seed, and his Blessing upon your Offspring, *Isa.* xlv. 4, 5. and that he has promised that Christ shall have a Seed to serve him, and that his Name shall be remembered to all Generations, *Psal.* xxii. 30. and *Psal.* xlv. 17. And consider, that God hath promised to circumcise your Hearts, and the Hearts of your Seed, to love the Lord your God with all your Heart, *Deut.* xxx. 6. And in bringing your Children to the Lord, in the Strength of Grace, fix your Faith upon these

these his Words of Promise; and, in so doing, you may be assured of Success in this Duty and Exercise.

And, if the present Generation would bring the rising Generation to Christ, then they would be directed, 1. To come to Christ themselves, as to a *living Stone, disallowed indeed of Men, but chosen of God, and precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. and to humble themselves under the mighty Hand of God, who *resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble*: To be humbled for their own Sins, *Psal. xxxviii. 18.* and to be as Doves in the Valleys, every one mourning for their own Iniquities: And to be humbled for the Sins of the present Generation, the Profanity, Atheism, Lewdness, Wantonness, Drunkenness, and Scoffing at Religion which prevails; for the publick Indignities done to the Lord Jesus by all Ranks, by the Courts of Judgment, by the State's invading the Rights of the Redeemer's Crown, and by Church-judicatories their silent and sinful Connivance at all the Dishonours done to the Lord of Glory; and by Intrusions made upon the Heritage of the Lord, thus taking away the Bread of Life from the Souls of the rising Generation. And let your Hearts be deeply affected with the Signs of the Lord's Anger, and with the Apostasy of this Generation. It is Matter of deep Humiliation, that the false Prophet and the unclean Spirit are passing uncontrouled through the Land; the grossest of Errors are spread in all Corners, to the Perdition and Destruction of the Souls of Men; the supreme Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is opposed and overthrown; the

the Work of the Spirit of God, in the Conversion and Sanctification of sinful Men, is denied and subverted; and Self-love is declared to be the Principle, Rule and Standard of all religious Actions, and Self-interest to be their main and ultimate End: If these Foundation-truths be buried, what shall become of the rising Generation, but that they will lay aside all Regard to God and Religion, and be drenched in mere Atheism and Infidelity, to the Dishonour of God, and to their own eternal Destruction? And what Reason have you to lament the Neutrality of some that have the Root of the Matter, and are notwithstanding continuing in a Conjunction with these who have denied those Foundation-truths, and are associated with those that have given up with Christ's Headship, and taken their Holding of the Powers of the Earth? Besides that, it might be made to appear, that such an Association is most unwarrantable, as thereby they partake of other Mens Sins, do not bring them to a Conviction of these Enormities that are censurable by the Word of God, and thus suffer Sin to ly upon them; and, in Opposition to the Rule of the Word, they do not withdraw from, but continue in Conjunction with, those that walk most disorderly. It is most manifest, that such a Course as this cannot possibly be a proper Mean to assert and defend the Royalties of the Redeemer's Crown, nor to maintain the Purity of Doctrine, the Government, Worship and Discipline of Christ's House, and transmit them faithfully to Posterity; which Church officers and Church-judicatories are most sacredly bound to do, not only from the solemn Oath

of God in our Covenants National and Solemn League, but by the very Nature and Duties of their Office, by all the Rules laid down in God's holy Word, and by all the Ties of Nature; that is, by Humanity itself, and the Love and Regard they ought naturally to have for their own Posterity and the rising Generation. *Eli's* Coldness and Neutrality in the Matters of God was severely punished in that good Man; and it was in itself a dreadful Judgment to the Generation wherein he lived, as it was an effectual Bar in the Way of Reformation, and as the whole Tribes of *Israel* were thereby hardened in their Course of Apostasy from the Lord, and, as the Fruit of it, were brought under most dreadful Marks of the Divine Displeasure. 2. If you who are the present Generation would bring your Children to Christ, then set apart some Time for secret Fasting, and the Prayer of Faith for your Children, *Job* i. 5. and instruct them daily in the good Ways of the Lord, encouraging them in Well-doing, and correcting them for their Faults. Talk with them when you sit in your House, and when you walk by the Way, when you ly down, and when you rise up; *Deut.* vi. 7. Talk with them of their baptismal Vows, and of their Warrant to believe in the Lord Jesus, and of their Duty to devote themselves to the Lord, as you have endeavoured, thro' Grace, to do it in their Name. Talk with them of the Love of God in sending his Son to the World, and of the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge; of their Duty to love the Lord, and of the Promise of Grace to enable them to love him, *Deut.* xxx. 6. Talk with

with them and tell them of the Works of God for this Land, in our glorious Reformation and wonderful Revolution; *Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the Towers thereof: Mark ye well her Bulwarks, consider her Palaces; that ye may tell it to the Generation following: For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our Guide even unto Death,* Psal. xlviii. 12, 13, 14. Talk with them and tell them of the Solemn Engagements these Lands are under to promote Reformation, and to walk closely with God, by our Covenants National and Solemn League; and tell them of our Backslidings and Defections from the Lord, and of the Breaches and Violations of the Vows of God. Talk with them of God's wonderful Appearances for us, and of their Duty to cleave to the Lord with Purpose of Heart. Tell them of the Ordinances, the pleasant Palaces of Zion, where the King is held in the Galleries; and of the Promises of God, which are her Bulwarks. Let it be your Exercise, *to show to the Generation to come the Praises of the Lord, and his Strength, and the wonderful Works that he hath done. For he established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel, that you should make them known to your Children: That the Generations to come might know them; who should arise and declare them to their Children: That they might set their Hope in God, and not forget the Works of God, but keep his Commandments* Psal. lxxviii. 4, 5, 6, 7. Talk with them of God's Covenant of Grace and Promise, which is God's Testimony established in Jacob, and his

Law appointed in *Israel*. Talk with them of the comprehensive Blessing and Promise of this Covenant, that *this God is our God for ever and ever*. Talk with them of the Absoluteness and Freedom of this Covenant; and of the Righteousness of Christ the only proper Condition of this Covenant, which being fulfilled, the rising Generation, as well as others, may warrantably put in a Claim for all the Blessings of the Covenant, in Christ's Right, and for Christ's Sake; and that such a Claim will be certainly sustained in the Court of Heaven. And tell them to set their Hope in God, who hath raised Christ from the Dead, and given him Glory, that our Faith and Hope might be in God.

We now proceed to conclude this Discourse, by directing a Word to you who are the rising Generation. And,

1st, It is necessary that you examine and try yourselves, whether or not *Exam.* you have as yet come to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant. 1. then, Is it your Exercise with young *Josiah*, 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 3. to prepare your Hearts to seek the Lord God of your Fathers? Early Seekers of Christ shall not seek him in vain; for those that seek him early shall find him, *Prov.* viii. 17. Young Seekers of the Lord have some Insight into the Evil of Sin, and they are tenderly affected with it; young *Josiah* his Heart was tender, and he wept before the Lord, 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 21, 27, 30. he wept not only for his original Sin, and his actual Sins, but for the Sins

of the Land and People among whom he lived: And is this your Exercise? The Voice of Prayer is heard among young Seekers; they read the Scriptures, and the Word of the Lord is precious to them; and they devote themselves to the Lord, to love the Name of the Lord, and to serve him, thro' the Grace of Jesus Christ. *Josiah*, while he was yet young, in the sixteenth Year of his Age, *made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his Testimonies with all his Heart, and with all his Soul*, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31. But, in order to your devoting yourselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duties, you must by Faith take hold of God's Covenant of Promise; seeing you can no otherwise be accepted but by the Righteousness of Christ, and no otherwise assisted but by the Grace of Christ, which is exhibited to you in the Promise of God's Covenant.

2^{dly}, Do ye believe in the Son of God? Have you got a Sight of the King in his Beauty; and was your Soul made to follow hard after him; and were your Desires drawn out after the *Desire of all Nations*? Is Christ *precious* to you, and *more than another Beloved*? for, *to those that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. And do you account all Things but Loss and Dung to win Christ, and to be found in him, not having your own Righteousness, but that which is by the Faith of Christ? to be found in him as *Noah* was found in the Ark, and as the Manslayer was found in the City of Refuge.

3^{dly}, Have your Hearts been made to burn with Love to the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you
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seen him to be the Chiefest among Ten thousand, and altogether lovely? Do you love him, and breathe after Fellowship with him, and Nearness to him, laying with the Church, *Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, and where thou makest thy Flock to rest at Noon?* Song i. 7. Do you love him, and keep his Commandments, and breathe after Holiness and Conformity to him? Do you love his Ordinances, and esteem a Day in his Courts better than a Thousand elsewhere, and delight in the Place where his Honour dwelleth? Do you love his People, and account them the excellent Ones of the Earth, in whom is all your Delight? Do you prefer *Zion* to your chiefest Joy; and are you affected with the Desolations of the Sanctuary, and grieved for the Affliction of *Joseph*? Do you rejoice when he is honoured; and do the Reproaches of those that reproach him fall upon you? Or, is there nothing so humbling to you, as that you have so little Love to Christ; nothing a greater Burden to you, than the Weakness of thy Love to Christ; and is there nothing so comfortable to you as the Promise of the Spirit, to manifest the Glory of Christ to your Soul, *John* xvi. 14. and to shed his Love broad in your Hearts? Then you are of the Number of those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity, and of these little Children of whom is the Kingdom of God.

We now proceed to a Word of
Exhortation; and may the Lord; by *Exhor.*
 his Holy Spirit, perswade and deter-
 mine you to come to the Lord Jesus Christ,
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who is come in the Name of the Lord to save you, and who is come that you may have Life, and have it more abundantly!

1. then, We exhort you to believe in the Son of God; for this is to come to Christ, and this is the ^{work} of God, to believe in him whom God hath sent. Believe the Record of God concerning his Son; and *this is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son.* He that hath the Son hath Life, 1 John v. 11, 12. You may well believe what God testifieth; but God testifieth, that he hath given to you eternal Life, and that this Life is in his Son, as the Spring and Fountain of this Life: And he testifieth, that he hath given to you his Son; for he that hath the Son hath Life. Faith has Christ, has the Son; and Faith only has him, because God has given him; for Faith can have nothing but what God gives. God gives Christ, and Faith receiveth him, and hath him in Possession: But he is given to many that do not receive him; and this is their Unbelief, that they do not and will not receive God's Gift of Christ, and of Life in him. For tho' Christ be given in Possession only to those that by Faith receive him, yet Christ, and Life in him, is given unto all that hear the Gospel, in the Offer and Right to put in your Claim to Christ and Life in him as yours; and every one of you is warranted to receive him as yours, and lay Claim to him and all the Blessings of his Purchase as your own, in a Way of Grace. He is given of God to you to be your Kinsman-Redeemer, *Job* xix. 25. *Isa.* ix. 6. He is given to be a Light to you that

that sit in Darknels, in the Region and Shadow of Death; to be a Ransomer, to proclaim the Gospel-jubilee, and Liberty to the Captives, *Isa.* lxi. 1. He is given to be a Covenant to the People, *Isa.* xlix. 8. to be the New-covenant Head, the Surety and Trustee of the Covenant, and to dispense all the Blessings of the Covenant. He is given to be a Restorer of Paths to dwell in, to cause to inherit the desolate Heritages; to be thy Head and Husband, to betrothe thee unto him for ever; to be a Leader to thee through all thy dark bewildered Steps; to be a Saviour to thee from all thy Sins; to be a Physician to heal all thy Plagues; and to be the Salvation of God to the Ends of the Earth.

What God hath said and recorded, you may and ought to believe: Now God hath said, that he offereth and giveth to you Life, and Christ the Prince of Life; that he giveth to you Life, and Christ the Fountain of Life. He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son, 1 *John* v. 10. Unbelief doth consist in discrediting what God hath said. Now, the Sin of Unbelief is not your disbelieving that God giveth Christ to the Elect, that he giveth Christ to others; but your not believing that God offereth and giveth Christ to you in particular, and that you have a Warrant and Right to accept of him. Thus it was with the *Jews*; the Promise was to them and to their Children, *Acts* ii. 39. but they did not credit the Word of Salvation sent unto them, but rejected the Counsel of God against themselves. And thus, when the Brasen Serpent was lifted up before all the Con-

Congregation of Israel; if Multitudes of them perished by not looking up to the Brazen Serpent, it was not because the Remedy was not offered and given to them as well as to the rest of the Congregation, but because they did not look to it, nor credit God's Word that a Look would cure them.

2. We exhort you to come to Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new Covenant: And it is the Voice of Christ to you who are the rising Generation; *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God.* Our Lord commandeth you to be called; and we say to you, as it was said to the blind Man, *Mark x. 49. Be of good Comfort, rise, for he calleth thee.* He calleth for your Hearts; *My Son, give me thy Heart.* He calleth you to come in to a Marriage-relation to him, and to sweet Fellowship with him, upon the Mountains of Myrrh, and the Hills of Frankincense, till the Day break and the Shadows flee away. He calleth you to come with all your Sins, to be pardoned; with all your Plagues, to be healed; with all your Wants, to be supplied; and with all your Burdens, to be relieved.

As to you who are advanced in Years, tho' it is in Youth he ordinarily brings in to himself, yet he is sovereign that way. O Sinner, if forty, if fifty Years old, we say, Yet even now is the Word of this Salvation sent unto you; rise, for he, this Moment, calleth you. Thus he calleth some at the eleventh Hour; and thus Paul was called when advanced in Years, *1 Cor. xv. 8. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of Time.*

And

Rising Generation.

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And if you who are the rising Generation would be directed how to come, then come depending on God's Word of Promise for Grace and Strength to come; for he has said it, *Psal. xxii. 31. They shall come, and they shall declare his Righteousness.* Come, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Faith, *Heb. xii. 2.* and say, with the Church, *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Come in a mourning Frame that you have been so long a-coming, that you have been among the last to bring back the King: And come rejoicing that you are yet called and invited to come; for, *Blessed are you who are called to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb.*

Come then to him with all your Hosannas and Praises of Faith, *Mat. xxi. 15, 16.* for out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings he has perfected Praise. Come to him with all your Supplications and Prayers of Faith, to be perfumed with his Incense; and come to him with the Confidence of Faith. And, in coming to him, depend upon the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of Faith; for it is the Work of the Spirit, to glorify *Christ, John xvi. 14.* And when *Jesus* is in his Glory, then your Souls will follow hard after him as the Chariots of *Amminadib*, and the Language of thy Heart will be, *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

Christ's

Christ's Call to the Rising Generation.

S E R M O N II.

Gen. xxviii. 10, 11, 12, 13, 19. *And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain Place, and tarried there all Night—and lay down in that Place to sleep: And he dreamed, and behold, a Ladder set upon the Earth, and the Top of it reached to Heaven: And behold, the Angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac.—And he called the Name of that Place Bethel.*

WE may notice from these Words, and their Connexion in this Chapter, that *Jacob* had this Vision in his Youth, and in the Day of his Distress, when he was an Exile from his Father's House, and fled from the Face of *Esau* his Brother, who sought his Life.

In the Words we may remark more particularly, 1. The Season of this Manifestation; it was when *Jacob* was going from *Beersheba* towards *Haran*, going from his native Country to a foreign Land, in Compliance with the Call of God's Providence. 2. The Manner in which the Manifestation was given; it was in a Night-vision: And this was one of the Ways in which God spake unto the Fathers; but he hath now in these last Times spoken unto us by his own Son

Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things. 3. The Manifestation itself: Behold, a Ladder set upon the Earth, and the Top of it reached Heaven. This Ladder was an Emblem of Christ, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, John xiv. 6. And the Angels are said to ascend and descend, as being at his Command in the Administration of his Kingdom, *Heb. i. 14. John i. 51.* And he saw *the Lord standing above it*; God as in Christ reconciling the World to himself, proclaiming his Covenant of Promise, *I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac.* 4. The gracious and kindly Impression this Manifestation had upon *Jacob*; he says, *This is none other but the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven.* And, he called the Name of the Place Bethel. Bethel signifies the House of God; tho' it was a solitary Place, yet the Divine Presence made it to *Jacob* the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven. From the Words, we take Notice of the following

DOCTRINE; *That the Time of Youth is a special Season of Bethel Manifestations, wherein God doth manifest to the Souls of Men the Glory of Christ, and doth reveal himself as a reconciled God in Christ, and condescends to shew unto them his holy Covenant of Promise.*

In discoursing this Doctrine, we shall, by Divine Assistance, 1. Offer a few Remarks concerning these *Bethel* Manifestations, which the Lord frequently condescends to bless the Sons of

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Men with in the Days of their Youth. 2. Speak a little of these Manifestations, and shew what it is he doth manifest and reveal to the rising Generation in the Days of their Youth. And, 3. Apply the Doctrine.

We proceed to the *first* Thing proposed, To offer a few *Remarks* concerning these *Bethel* Manifestations which the Lord frequently condescends to bless the Sons of Men with in the Days of their Youth. And,

1st, We remark, That there is a *Bethel* Manifestation of Christ in his Glory in the Morning of Conversion, when the Soul is first visited with the Day-spring from on High: This was the Privilege of *Paul* in the Day that he was effectually called, *Acts ix.* compared with *1 Cor. xv. 8.* And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due Time. The Day of his Conversion was his Birth-day, wherein he was born from above. He was a Man advanced in Years, and had long opposed the Gospel, and rejected the Offers of Grace; and therefore looks on himself as one born out of due Time: Yet it was a blessed Time to his Soul, and the best Day that ever he saw; it was to him a Day of Manifestation, wherein he saw the holy One and the just, and heard the Voice of his Mouth. And so is it, in some Measure, to all that are effectually called; Tho' every one cannot distinctly tell the Day and Time of their first Meeting with Christ, yet every one of them has got such a Glimpse of the Glory of Christ, as has drawn their Heart, their Trust,

Trust, and the Desires of their Soul towards himself.

2dly, We remark, That the Lord's People have *Bethel* Meetings with Christ in the Morning of a renewed Manifestation, after they have been mourning without the Sun, and walking in Darkness having no Light. And they may be said to attain such *Bethel* Manifestations,

1. When he manifests himself unto them in the Glory of his Person, in his Offices, and in the Freedom and Permanency of his Love and Grace; and in his comfortable Relations, Mediation, and powerful Intercession, *John xiv. 21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, — and I will love him, and manifest myself to him.* 2. When he looseth their Bonds, and they are made to walk in the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, *Psal. cxvi. 16.* And when he hears their Prayers, and gives them gracious and comfortable Returns: *In the Day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with Strength in my Soul.* And, *Psal. cxvi. 1, 2. I love the Lord, because he hath heard my Voice and my Supplications: Because he hath inclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* 3. When their Souls are made in a lively Exercise of Faith to feed upon his Word; when he speaketh in to their Hearts, and converseth with them by his Word and the Motions of his Spirit upon their Souls, *Luke xxiv. 32. And they said one to another, Did not our Heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the Way; and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* 4. When they attain, thro'

Grace, a *Bethel* Nearness to God, Song i. 4. *The King hath brought me into his Chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy Love more than Wine; the Upright love thee.* Sometimes Christians have attain'd such Nearness to the Lord, that they have express'd it, that they thought God could not have been so near a Soul upon Earth; and some have been made to cry out, *Hold, Lord, for I can hold no more, for I am an earthen Vessel*; because their old Bottles were like to break to Shivers with a Fill of that new Wine of Fellowship and Communion with God! 5. When they have had such *Bethel* Manifestations, that he has drawn by the Vail, and they have seen the King in his Beauty, and beheld the Land that is afar off; and when their Graces have been excited, and drawn forth into a lively Exercise, by fresh Influences of the Holy Spirit: And thus their Spices have been made to flow out; and the Beloved has come into his Garden, to see the Beds of Spices, and to gather Lilies. 6. When they have had *Bethel* Intimations made unto them: When the Lord has said to them, *Son, be of good Cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee*; and, *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, therefore with Loving-kindness have I drawn thee*; When, with Power and Evidence of his Spirit, he saith to them who are of a fearful Heart, *Be strong, fear not*; and encourageth them with such a Word, *Fear not, I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified, he is risen as he said; come, see the Place where the Lord lay.* 7. When he giveth *Bethel* Communications unto their Souls; when

he giveth Strength to them in their Weakness, and Life to them in their Deadness; when he giveth to them Peace and Pardon, and giveth to them himself, which is more than all other Blessings, *Rev. ii. 28. And I will give him the Morning-star.* He giveth them sometimes Grapes from *Eshcol*, the First-fruits of the Land of Promise, a *Pisgah* View of the Land afar off, a Prelibation and Foretaste of Glory, in giving them some Drops of that Wine that goeth down sweetly, making the Lips of them that are asleep to speak. Thus, sometimes, they are made to begin some Notes of the Song of the Redeemed here below, and have such Communion and Fellowship with God thro' Jesus Christ, that it is to them the Gate of Heaven and the Suburbs of Glory.

3dly, We remark, That there are some Means and Ordinances of God's Appointment, wherein the Followers of Christ are privileged with these Manifestations. It is in the Sanctuary, in the Attendance upon publick Ordinances, that they see his Power and his Glory, *Psal. lxiii. 1, 2.* It was in hearing the Gospel preached, that a great Company of the Priests became obedient to the Faith; and it was by the Ministry of the Word that the Lord open'd the Heart of *Lydia*, to attend to the Things that were spoken: It is in the Field of Meditation, that they get sometimes a refreshing Manifestation of the Glory of the Lord; *When I remember thee upon my Bed*, saith the Psalmist, *my Soul followeth hard after thee.* And it is in reading and searching the Scriptures, that they behold the Glory of Christ, *2 Cor. iii. 18.* "Often (said
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“ an eminent Saint) have I seen the invisible
 “ God; and, when I saw him, it was in his
 “ Word.” And it was in the Duty of Prayer,
Gen. xxxii. 24, 30. that *Jacob* had a most re-
 markable Manifestation of the Glory of Christ.
 He wrestled with the Angel of the Covenant till
 the Breaking of the Day, *and he blessed him*
there: And Jacob called the Name of the Place
Peniel; for I have seen God Face to Face, and
my Life is preserved.

4thly, We remark, That there are some Sea-
 sons wherein the Lord condescends to give Be-
 zel Manifestations to his Disciples and Fol-
 lowers; such as, when they are lamenting after
 the Lord, and seeking him with an holy restless
 Activity, *Song iii 3. I sought him whom my*
Soul loveth.—It was but a little I passed from
them, when I found him whom my Soul lo-
veth: I held him, and would not let him go.
 When humbled for their own Sins, and the Sins
 of the Land, which have provoked him to with-
 draw: Thus, when *Daniel* was exercised in this
 Manner, it was intimated to him, *O Daniel, a*
Man greatly beloved, Dan. ix. 23. When suf-
 fering for the Cause and Interest of Christ: Thus
Moses had a Vision of Christ in a Flame of Fire
 out of the Midst of a Bush, when he was bear-
 ing the Reproach of Christ at the Back of the
 Mount *Horeb*, and was there feeding *Jethro's*
 Sheep: And *John*, when in the Isle *Patmos*
 for the Testimony of Jesus, had the most re-
 freshing Manifestations of the Glory of Christ,
 whose Countenance is like the Sun shining in his
 Strength. When a Person has difficult Work to
 undertake at the Lord's Command: Thus *Moses*
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and Aaron had a Manifestation of the Glory of the Lord, and could say, *The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us.* When a Soul is tenderly affected with Christ's Absence, and is mourning because the Comforter is far away, *John xx. 11, 15, 16. But Mary stood without at the Sepulchre weeping—Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the Gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have born him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary: She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabbi, which is to say, Master. Mary Magdalene came and told the Disciples, that she had seen the Lord.* And in Times of Affliction, and in the Days of Youth: *Jacob* was at this Time in his Youth, and was destitute and afflicted, being an Exile from his Father's House; and he has a *Bethel* Manifestation of the Glory of the Lord; and he called the Name of the Place *Bethel*.

5thly, We remark, That frequently the most sensible and comfortable Manifestations are attained to in the Days of Youth; for, not only to *Jacob*, but to *Solomon* also, did the Lord appear in his Youth, *1 Kings iii. 5. In Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a Dream by Night.*

6thly, We remark, That sometimes these Manifestations are surprising. *Jacob* saith, *The Lord is in this Place, and I knew it not.* They fill the Heart with an holy Aw and Reverence of God; *How dreadful is this Place! said Jacob:* And they bring along with them some sweet Taste of Heart-warming, Soul-refreshing

freshing Communion with God; *This is the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven.* Christ is the Gate by which the Righteous enter in; and a Meeting with him brings the Soul to the Suburbs of Heaven.

7thly, We remark, That the Memory of Manifestations of God in Youth, remains with the Saints through their Pilgrimage; thus *Jacob* could not all his Life forget the Manifestations of God in his Youth, and the Thoughts of them were fresh and supporting to him on his Death-bed, *Gen. xlviii. 3. God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in Canaan, and blessed me.* And the Lord himself doth keep a Record of his gracious Visits to Souls in their Youth; hence it was that he said to *Jacob, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the Pillar, and vowedst the Vow.*

8thly, We remark, That frequently the Lord doth make Use of his Rod in the Days of Youth. As we have formerly observed it was *Jacob's* Case; so, if it is thy Case, Reader, then plead the Promise of God's Covenant; *I will cause you to pass under the Rod, and I will bring you into the Bond of the Covenant, Ezek. xxi. 37.* The Design of the Rod is to bring you into the Bond of the Covenant; and the Lord himself hath undertaken to bring you, tho' you are neither able nor willing to come of yourselves. This Bond of the Covenant will not rot in the Grave, for it is an everlasting Covenant: And the Blessings of the Covenant are free to needy Sinners, such as you are; hence the Blessings of the Covenant, for their Freedom, are called *Mercies*, the *free Mercies of David.* Mercy, I am sure, will

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answer thy Case, be what it will: O, then, trust a promising God, and put the Work in his Hand, who has said it, *I will cause you to pass under the Rod, and bring you into the Bond of the Covenant.*

We proceed, in the *second* Place, to speak a little of these Manifestations, and to shew what it is he doth manifest and reveal to the rising Generation in the Days of their Youth. And, 1st, They get a Manifestation of Jesus Christ, the Mediator betwixt God and Man. *Jacob* saw a Ladder set upon the Earth, and the Top of it reaching to Heaven: This Ladder was an Emblem of Christ, who is called *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, John xiv. 6. And he is the Mediator between God and Man, thro' whom we approach unto God. Christ the Son of God, like *Jacob's* Ladder, was set upon the Earth, in his Incarnation and Birth at *Bethlehem*; and the Top of it reached Heaven, in his Deity and Divine Nature: Thus, when he was upon Earth, he affirmed of himself, that he was likewise in Heaven; *No man hath ascended to Heaven, but the Son of Man which came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven.* The Ladder, the Foot of it upon the Earth; and the Top of it in Heaven at the same Time, was an Emblem of Christ in his Person, God-Man, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.* Heaven and Earth are brought together, through Christ's Mediation;

and there is an Union by him betwixt God and Man, an Union of Peace and Reconciliation, an Union of Friendship, and an Union of End and Design. And, thro' him, there is a blessed Intercourse and Communion betwixt Heaven and Earth; for, through him, by one Spirit we have Access to the Father, and come to God the Judge of all; and, through him, we believe in God, who raised him from the Dead, and gave him Glory, that our Faith and Hope might be in God: And we have Boldness to enter into the Holiest of all by the Blood of Jesus, through the new and living Way, which he hath consecrated for us by the Vail of his Flesh. This Ladder is fixed fast in the Earth, in his Satisfaction upon the Cross, in his Death and deep Humiliation; and the Top of it is fixed as fast in Heaven, in his Ascension, Exaltation, and Intercession within the Vail. And it is a Way and a Ladder for the Inhabitants of the Earth: The Foot of it is not set in Hell, for the fallen Angels; no, there is a great and an unpassable Gulph betwixt Heaven and that Place of Separation from God; but the Foot of it is set upon the Earth, for the Sons of Men; and every Man, young or old, who hears this everlasting Gospel, is invited, called and warranted to come to God thro' Christ, who is *the Way, the Truth and the Life*: There is no Cherubim or flaming Sword to obstruct your Access; but *the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and whosoever will, let him come and take the Water of Life freely.*

2dly, The Lord doth manifest and reveal himself

himself to Sinners in the Days of their Youth, as he is a God in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself.

Jacob, in this Vision which he had in his Youth, saw a Ladder, an Emblem of Christ in his Mediation; and he saw the Lord, standing above it, proclaiming his Covenant of Promise, saying, *I am the God of Abraham thy Father.*

God is seen, in Christ, in his ineffable Glory, in the Glory of all his infinite Perfections: He is the Eternal, Self-existent Being; he is JEHOVAH, and his Glory he will not give to another. The Glory of his infinite Holiness and Justice is seen in Christ, *Whom he hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.*

He is seen in Christ as a reconciled God, well pleased for his Righteousness Sake, *Matth. iii. 17. Lo, a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* God is well pleased with Christ, and with all those who are in Christ; and those who are in Christ are well pleased with Christ, and well pleased with God as he is in Christ: For God, as he is in Christ, is a reconciled God; yea, he is *in Christ reconciling the World to himself; willing, on Christ's Account, to be reconciled to any Man of the World whatsoever who hears this Gospel; and beseeching Sinners to be reconciled to him, through Christ, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.* God is so well pleased with the Satisfaction of Christ, that he doth intreat and ob-

test Sinners to believe his Love and Good-will to them, to stand no more at a Distance from him, but to take the Benefit of Peace, of Pardon, of Grace and Glory, for Christ's Sake, and upon the Account of what he hath done, who was made Sin for us, tho' he knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him

God is seen in Christ as a promising God, *Gen. xxviii. 14, 15. And in thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed: And, Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all Places whither thou goest.* The Divine Presence is promised, preserving and persevering Grace is promised, the Blessing is promised, and he commandeth the Blessing out of Zion, even Life for evermore.

God, as he is in Christ, is a giving God; *The Land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed, Gen. xxviii. 13.* The earthly Canaan was a Type and Figure of Heaven: The Inheritance of the Saints in Light is given of God, here in the Earnest of it, and hereafter in the full Possession of it; for he giveth Grace and Glory, *Psal. lxxxiv. 11.* he giveth the new Heart, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26.* the Heart to know the Lord, to love the Name of the Lord, the Heart of Flesh. In the first Covenant, Man was to give something to God; in the new Covenant, God giveth all Things to sinful Men, in a Way of free and sovereign Grace; he giveth them to inherit all Things, and he will be to them a God; and he giveth to them the Kingdom: *Fear not, little Flock,*

it is the Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

God, as he is in Christ, is a forgiving God; he has proclaimed his Name, *The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* He is in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, and not imputing their Trespases unto them; because he made him Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 19, 21. In Jesus, we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins. Through him, all Manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men; and we receive the Forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified, by Faith that is in him. Thro' him, God has promised to be merciful to our Unrighteousness, and to remember our Sins and Iniquities no more. It is therefore a full and free Indemnity, which God has published thro' Christ in the Gospel.

And God, as he is in Christ, is Love, 1 John iv. 8, 16. God is not only loving, but he is Love itself; and, by the Exercise of Faith, you are to believe, realize, and be perswaded of his Love to your Souls through Jesus Christ, and for his Sake alone, 1 John iv. 16. And we have known, and believed the Love that God hath to us; God is Love. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins; and sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.

And God is known and revealed in Christ,
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as our own God; *God, even our own God, shall bless us: And he that is our God, is the God of Salvation.* Have you seen God as he is in Christ? You can have no saving nor any comfortable Discovery of God to your sinful Souls, but as he is in Christ: Out of Christ he is a consuming Fire. God is only known and revealed in Christ as Love, as the Lord God merciful and gracious, pardoning Iniquity: And if you have not seen him, as he is in Christ, standing above *Jacob's* Ladder; you have never yet known God, nor seen him as he is.

3dly, God doth frequently manifest and reveal to Sinners, in the Days of their Youth, his holy Covenant of Promise. *Jacob* in his Youth saw this Ladder, an Emblem of Christ, and JEHOVAH standing above the Ladder, proclaiming his Covenant of Promise, saying, *I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac; and, I will be with thee, and will keep thee.* The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he sheweth them his Covenant: He sheweth the Freedom, the Excellency, and the Stability of his Covenant; and sheweth them the great and glorious Blessings and Privileges that are in his Covenant.

He sheweth them, that God himself is in the Covenant: Thus he said to *Jacob*, *I am the God of Abraham thy Father: I will be with thee, and will keep thee.* And this is the great Promise of the Covenant, *I will be your God, and ye shall be my People, Zech. 13. 9. I will say, It is my People; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.* God has made over himself to you in the Covenant, as your God in Christ's Right;

Right; and as your God in a Way of Promise, to be believed and relied on thro' Christ; as your God in a Way of Grace, and not in a Way of Merit, or in a Way of Works. Beware then that you reject not the Counsel of God against your own Souls.

Christ is seen to be in the Covenant as the Mediator of the Covenant, and as the Testator of the Covenant; as the contracting Party upon Man's Side in the Covenant, and as having fulfilled the Condition of the Covenant in his everlasting Righteousness; as having purchased all the Blessings of the Covenant, and as dispensing all the Grace of the Covenant to needy destitute Sinners of *Adam's House*.

The Holy Spirit of Promise is seen to be in the Covenant, as thy Teacher, Comforter and Sanctifier; and you are to believe in the Holy Ghost, and trust him to quicken thee under thy Deadness, and to enlighten thee under thy Darkness; and you are to depend upon him to manifest the Glory of Christ to your Souls, and to bring the Words of Christ to your Remembrance, *John xiv. 26. and xvi. 14.*

The Blessing is in the Covenant, *Gal. iii. 13, 14. That the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.* The Blessing of a free-gifted Righteousness is in the Covenant; the everlasting Righteousness of *Messiah* the Prince, which reigneth to eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord: The Blessing of the Pardon and Remission of Sins is in the Covenant; and the Blessing of Fellowship with God in his Ordinances here, and in the im-

immediate Enjoyment of him in Heaven hereafter.

The Presence of God, to be with you, is in the Covenant: Thus he said to *Jacob*, *I will be with thee, and will keep thee.* His Presence to be with you, in Prosperity and Adversity, in Life and at Death; to be with you, to comfort you in all your Tribulations; to support you under all your Burdens; to direct you in all your Straits; to guide you with his Counsel while here, and at Death to receive you to Glory. The Lord's Keeping and safe Preservation is in the Covenant, to keep thee from Sin, from *Satan's* Devices and Temptations; to preserve thy Soul; to preserve thy going out, and coming in, *Psal. cxxi.* to deliver thee from every evil Work, and to preserve thee to his heavenly Kingdom.

God's Faithfulness, Power and Mercy is in the Covenant, to secure the Accomplishment of all he hath promised, *Gen. xxviii. 15.* *I will not leave thee, till I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* Heaven, and the Kingdom that cannot be moved, is in the Covenant of Promise; *Canaan* was a Type of Heaven, and God said to *Jacob*, *The Land on which thou liest will I give thee.* And Death, the Passage to Heaven, is in the Covenant; *For all Things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, or Things present, or Things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's* *1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.*

Rising Generation: 65

We proceed to apply the Doctrine in an Use of *Examination*, and of *Exhortation*. And,

1. These who have seen God as in Christ, and to whom JEHOVAH *Exam.* hath revealed his holy Covenant of Promise, they are such as thro' Christ have *believed in God, who raised him up from the Dead, and gave him Glory, that our Faith and Hope might be in God, 1 Pet. i. 21.* They trust to the Promise, and wait for the Accomplishment of the Promise, thro' many contrary-like Appearances and Trials of their Faith, because they judge him faithful who hath promised; and they plead the Promise in their dark Hours, with the Confidence of Faith, *Psal. cxix. 49. Remember the Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*

2. These who have seen God as he is in Christ, have avouched him for their God, *Psal. xvi. 7. O my Soul, thou hast said to the Lord, Thou art my Lord.* They have joined themselves to the Lord, to love the Name of the Lord, and to serve him. They have taken hold of God's Covenant of Promise, *Isa. lvi. 6.* And as they account it a faithful Saying, so they judge it worthy of all Acceptation, *That Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom they are Chief.*

3. They cleave to the Lord with Purpose of Heart. Having seen him who is invisible, seen the Glory of the invisible God in the Person of Christ, they choose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, *Heb. xi. 25.*

We conclude this Discourse, exhorting you to believe and be persuaded of the Promise of God, *Heb. xi. 13. These all died in Faith, not having received the Promises in the Accomplishment of them, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth.* Believe the Promise as spoken to you, and trust to it as a Ground of Faith to thy Soul: For it is a Covenant of Promise; and the Promise is published to you, that it may be credited, believed and trusted to by you. The great Promise of the Covenant is, *I will be your God, and ye shall be my People:* And this Promise is given to you; for *there are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises.* It is given to be received by your Faith and Trust in the Mercy, Love, Grace and Faithfulness of God, brought near unto you in the Promise, as the Ground of thy Faith and assured Confidence. Nothing is more free than a Promise, and the Freedom of the Covenant is a great Encouragement to you to believe and trust to the Covenant of Promise. It is a Covenant of Grace, which was made for the Unworthy and Ill-deserving, and none else: And therefore, tho' unworthy, thou art warranted to trust to God's Covenant of Promise.

Christ's Call to the Rising Generation.

S E R M O N III.

Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. *And Jacob vowed a Vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me—then shall the Lord be my God. Jer. iii. 4, 19. Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me.*

IN these Words we may notice, 1. What was *Jacob's* Exercise in the Days of his Youth: He vowed a Vow at *Bethel*, saying, *If God will be with me*, or, as it may be read, *Seeing God will be with me*, seeing God has promised to be with me, and has revealed his Covenant of Promise unto me, has made over himself to me in the Covenant as my God; therefore *JEHOVAH shall be my God*. I trust to him, as a promising God, that he will be my God, thro' Christ Jesus; I depend on him as my God, and devote myself to his Service, Worship and Obedience: *Then the Lord shall be my God*. This Exercise of *Jacob*, in the Days of his Youth, is recorded as a Pattern worthy of your Imitation, who are the rising Generation.

2. In the other Place of Scripture, *Jer. iii. 4.* we have God's own Warrant to take hold of his Covenant of Promise in the Days of our Youth. *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth?*

3. In these Words we have an encouraging Promise of Grace, to enable us to put in our Claim to this wonderful Relation in which God is pleas'd to stand to us in the new Covenant; *And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me.*

DOCTRINE. *That as the Time of Youth is an especial Season of taking hold of God's Covenant of Promise; so we ought to depend upon God's promised Grace, to enable us to come personally into the Bond of the Covenant.*

In discoursing this Doctrine, we shall endeavour, by Divine Assistance, 1. To shew, that as God in the Covenant stands in the Relation of our God, so we ought, in the Application of Faith, to say, *The Lord shall be my God.* 2. Speak a little of the Import of these Words, *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth?* 3. Offer a few Remarks concerning the encouraging Promise of Grace, to enable us to put in our Claim to God as standing in the Relation of a Father in Christ Jesus unto us, who are fatherless, destitute Sinners of *Adam's House.* 4. Apply the Doctrine in a few Inferences.

We proceed to the *first* Thing proposed, namely, To shew, that as God in the Covenant stands in the Relation of our God, so we ought, by the Application of Faith, to say, *The Lord shall be my God.* And this Head shall be considered in a few Observations. And,

1st, We

1st, We may notice and observe, That Man, by the Breach of the first Covenant, forfeited all Right and Claim to the Relation of God as his God : But Christ as the second *Adam*, in virtue of his Fulfilling the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, by his everlasting Righteousness, acquired a new Claim and Title to this Relation of God as our God ; hence it is said of him, as the New-covenant Head, *Psal. lxxxix. 26. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.* Sin had made this World, which was like *Eden* the Garden of the Lord, to become like the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*, a Place of Crying and Howling ; and it had been eternally so, if the Son of God had not appear'd in our Behalf, and become the contracting Party on Man's Side in the Covenant of Grace : But, behold, in this howling Wilderness a Cry is heard from the New-covenant Head, as a publick Person, in the Name of all his Followers, *Thou art my God, the Rock of my Salvation.* And hence it is that our Lord saith, *I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*

2^{dly}, We may observe, That the great and leading Blessing of the New Covenant is the Promise of a Covenant-relation to God as our God in Christ Jesus, *Jer. xxxi. 33. But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, after these Days, saith the Lord—I will be their God, and they shall be my People. I will be their God ; this is the Soul's Blessedness : An Interest in God, as our God, is the Summary of all Happiness ; it is Heaven itself, and the very Heart and first Glory of Heaven, Rev. xxi. 7.*
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The Author of this Relation is God himself; *I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* They shall be an accepted People, thro' Christ the New-covenant Head, accepted thro' his Righteousness; and they shall be *my People*, an holy and sanctified People, thro' the Spirit and Grace of Christ the Head of the Redeemed from among Men. The Author of this Relation is God himself; *I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* *I will be*, speaks Grace; and *they shall be*, imports the same: And it being God's *I will be*, and *they shall be*, it is infallibly sure, and lays the most solid Foundation for Faith and Hope. The Ground of this Grant of Grace, and the Title to claim it, is God's Covenant: *But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, I will be their God.* The Right shall be conveyed to them in the Way of a Covenant, the Covenant made with Christ the second Adam and Representative of his Seed, a Covenant that stands fast in his Suretiship and Satisfaction; and upon the Account of his Doing and Dying, *I will be their God*: Upon the Account of what Christ has done, which is the greatest of Doings, the most Noble and Glorious that possibly can be done, I will do this; I will do all I can do all that a God can do for them, *I will be their God.* Man could do nothing for himself; but *when we were without Strength, in due Time Christ died for the Ungodly.* When Man could do nothing, then God did do great Things, the greatest Things, Things that Angels and Men shall eternally wonder at; for he made over himself to Man in the Way of his Covenant

that stands fast with Christ ; *This is the Covenant I will make with the House of Israel, I will be their God, and they shall be my People.*

3dly, We observe, That your Privilege is great, in this, that God is your God thro' Christ Jesus, *Deut. xxxiii. 29, 26, 27. Happy art thou, O Israel, O People saved by the Lord : For, There is none like the God of Jesurun, who rideth upon the Heavens for thy Help, and in his Excellency on the Sky ; the eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath arc the everlasting Arms.* You are happy, for God is your God ; God the Father is your Father to love you ; God the Son is your Saviour to save you from your Sins ; God the Holy Ghost is your Teacher, your Comforter and Sanctifier. All God's Perfections and Attributes are yours ; his Mercy is yours to pardon you, his Wisdom yours to direct you, and his Power is yours to protect you ; his Omniscience is yours to watch over you, his Holiness is yours to sanctify you and make you holy, and his Goodness is yours to bestow Grace and Glory and all good Things upon you ; his Omnipresence is yours to attend you, and solace you in all Places and Conditions ; his Eternity is the Date of your Happiness, and his Faithfulness is your Security, and insures the Accomplishment of all he has promised in the Covenant unto you ; his Justice is yours to punish your Enemies, and his All-sufficiency is yours to make you compleatly happy. And his Perfections, as made over to you in Christ, are a suitable Remedy for all the Evils which Sin has brought upon thee ; his Wisdom cures your Ignorance, his Grace your Guilt, and his Power your

your Weakness; his Mercy is a Remedy for your Misery, his Faithfulness for your Inconstancy, and his Holiness for your Impurity; and his Fulness supplieth all your Wants.

And, seeing God is your God, all his Promises are yours, all his Gifts and Graces are yours, and all his Creatures are yours; his Creatures on Earth are yours to sustain you; his Angels are yours to guard you, and to encamp about you; this World is your sojourning Place, and his Heavens are your Country and Inheritance.

And he will be your God, not for Days, Months or Years, but every Day, in every Place, and in every Condition; for he said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* He will be your God in all the Troubles you meet with, and will support you; he will be your God at Death, *Psal. xlviii. 14.* and, when all earthly Comforts fail you, he will not fail you. He will be your God after you are dead; *Mat. xxii. 31, 32.* That which was spoken to *Moses* at the Bush, was spoken unto you by God, saying, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living:* For the Dead in Christ do live unto him, and with him; and therefore their Bodies, which are rotting in the Grave, shall rise again; for he is the God of the whole Man, and the Body is a Part of the Man. And he will be your God for ever in Heaven. *Rev. xxi. 4. God himself shall be with them and be their God.* Happy art thou then, O *Israel*, a People saved by the Lord!

4thly, We observe, That you are not only warranted in a Way of Faith to apply this great

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Promise of the Covenant to yourself, but Grace is promised to enable you in a Way of Believing to say, *The Lord is my God.* Thus Jacob, in the Exercise of Faith, says in the Text, *The Lord shall be my God:* And this Language of Faith has been the Dialect of the Church in all Ages, *Psal. xci. 2. I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge; my God, and in him I will Trust.* The Lord saith in the Promise, *I will be thy God;* and Faith, in applying the Promise, saith, *The Lord shall be my God: I will say of the Lord, He is my God.* I will say in a Way of Faith and Believing, what God has said in a Way of Promise; for the Promise is given to be trusted to, to be credited and believed: Every one that reads the Promise, is warranted to believe the Promise with Application; for the Promise is spoken to you by God, as much as it was spoken to *Judah*, *Jer. xxxi. 33. I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* The Lord saith, *I will be thy God,* for Christ's Sake; and do you therefore say, with assured Confidence, *The Lord shall be my God,* for Christ's Sake. The Grace of the Holy Spirit is promised to you, to enable you to say it, *Zech. xiii. 9. I will say, It is my People; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.* I will say, *It is my People,* thro' Jesus Christ, and his Righteousness and Satisfaction; and they shall say, *The Lord is my God,* thro' Jesus Christ, and his Righteousness and Satisfaction. God cannot be the God of a Sinner, such as you are, otherwise than thro' Christ; and he will be the God of every Sinner that puts in his Claim to him thro' Christ, and in his Right. Are you pleased with the great

Grant and Promise of the Covenant, *God for your God?* and have your Eyes been open'd, to see Christ in the Glory of his Person? and has your Heart been made to acquiesce in the Tenor of the Covenant, the Holding of Grace, and thro' the Righteousness of Jesus? Then thou hast said it, *The Lord is my God.* And you may know for your Comfort, *That this God is your God for ever, and will be your Guide even unto Death.*

God giveth himself to you, in the Promise, for your God. Christ is a Prophet, to reveal God to you; he is a Priest, to bring you to God; and a King, to keep you with God: And therefore trust to him, and depend upon him as the Mediator betwixt God and you. And God is willing to be your God; and this is the Season of Mercy, to obtain God for your God: And I can tell you, as certainly as God is in Heaven, if you do not take him for your God, you shall repent it to all Eternity.

But, can you not say, that in some Measure this is your Exercise, thro' Grace, to make Choice of God for your God, *Psal. xvi. 2.* and to give yourselves to the Lord, *1 Cor. viii. 4.*? And, are not you well pleased with the Contrivance of Salvation, because it is so much calculated for debasing Self, and exalting free Grace?

And, seeing God giveth himself to you thro' Christ, it is just your great Business, in the Strength of Grace, to accept of God in Christ for your chief End; to aim at his Glory in all you do, *1 Cor. x. 31.* and to accept of him as your chief Happiness, the Rest of your Souls,
and

and the Delight of your Hearts, *Psal. cxvi. 7.* to take his Will and Law for your Rule, and to accept of him in Christ for your Portion and up-making All, *Lam. iii. 24.* And you are to devote yourselves to him, to be accepted in the Beloved; present yourselves in Soul and Body a living Sacrifice, acceptable thro' Christ the Gospel-altar, *Isa. lvi. 7.* You are to live to him who died for you, and rose again; you are to obey what he commands, in his Strength; and you are to be ruled by his Laws, and disposed of by his Providence: You are to give all you have to him, your Soul with all its Faculties and Powers, your Body with all its Members; your Understanding to know him, and to think upon him; your Will to chuse him; your Heart to love him; your Eyes to read his Word, and behold his Works; and your Lips to pray to him, to bless and to praise him. For you are not your own, but bought with a Price; therefore glorify God in your Bodies and Spirits, which are God's. Account not your Life dear to you, if he call you to witness for him, even to resisting unto Blood; but let it be your Concern in all Things to lift up the Burden of his Praise; for you are *a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, that you might shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darknes into his marvellous Light.*

Secondly, We proceed to speak a little of what is imported in these Words of the Text, *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth?* And, 1st, These Words do import, that a Call and

Invitation is directed from God to you who are the rising Generation, to take hold of his Covenant of Promise: And thus saith the Lord to you, and to every one of you in particular, *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?* This is a Message to you from God; and the Word of Exhortation speaketh unto you as unto Children.

2dly, It importeth, that every one of you in particular must personally take hold of the Covenant. The Faith of your Parents will not save you, nor give you an Interest in the Covenant, unless you yourself believe on the Son of God. *Wilt thou not, in particular and by Name and Sirname, cry unto me, My Father?*

3dly, It importeth, that God publisheth an Indemnity and an Act of Grace, and is willing to pass by all your former Refusals of Christ, whether you are young or old; *Wilt thou not, from this Time, cry unto me, My Father?* Whatever you have done in former Times, behold now, even yet is the accepted Time, the Day of Salvation! *To Day, if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation, in the Day of Temptation in the Wilderness.*

4thly, It importeth, that it is most acceptable to God, that you in particular take hold of his Covenant, and call him *Father* in Christ's Right, and in Christ's Name, and by the Assistance of the Spirit of Christ. You may speak it, yea, cry it to God himself; and it will be Melody sounding sweetly in the Court of Heaven, and before a Throne of Grace: *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?*

5thly,

6thly, It importeth, that the Lord himself answereth all your Objections against calling him *My Father*. There can be no Reason against it, but your own Unbelief, that you will not call him *My Father*; *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?* Your first Father *Adam* died, the Head of the first Covenant died, and left you and all his other Children fatherless: But the Lord speaketh an encouraging Word to you in the new Covenant; a Call is directed to you who are fatherless, from him in whom the Fatherless do find Mercy; *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?* Here he declares that he is willing to stand in the Relation of a Father in Christ unto you, and directs you to lay Claim to him in the Relation of a Father: And tho' you should object, that your Trespases are grown up unto the Heavens, and your Sins are more than the Hairs of your Head; yet he saith, as appears from the Context, *Tho' thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return unto me, saith the Lord. Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?*

6thly, It importeth, that the Grounds of Faith laid down in the Word are stable and solid, so that the chief of Sinners, who hear this everlasting Gospel, may venture their Soul's Salvation upon them, with an assured Confidence of Faith; so that they may not only say it and whisper it with a soft Voice, but they may cry it with a full Breath in the Hearing of Angels and Men, to the Glory of God in their Salvation, *Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation. Wilt thou not from this*

this Time cry unto me, Thou art my Father? Faith, when it is planted in the Soul, and drawn forth into Exercise, with a Sight of its Object, it is exerted with the greatest Freedom, and with the Complacency of the whole Soul; for, according to the Strength of Faith, the Cry and Acclamation is raised, and doth ring and echo through the whole Man, *Thou art my God, the Rock of my Salvation.* And Faith, where it is, doth not only realize its Object, but believeth with a particular Application to the Man himself, saying, *My Father.* *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father?*

7thly, It doth import, that Youth doth need a Guide. *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth?* Young Men need a Guide in their Way, how to cleanse their Way, *Psal. cxix. 9.* *By what Means shall a young Man cleanse his Way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy Word.* The Way of your Heart is a polluted Way; and you would acknowledge it to be such, if you knew the Plague of your own Heart, *1 Kings viii. 38.* Had you a spiritual and humbling Discovery of the Atheism, Self-conceit, Self-righteousness, Enmity, Earthly mindedness, Vanity and Blasphemy with which your Hearts are defiled; and that your Hearts are deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked; you would be perswaded that you infinitely need it, that God, by his Word and Spirit, should cleanse this Way of your Heart. You need to have the Way of your Worship cleansed, to be guided of God to worship him in Spirit and in Truth; to have the Way

your Walk and Conversation cleansed, that your Corruptions may be mortified, and you may be kept from youthful Lusts which war against the Soul, and that you may have your *Conversation in Heaven, from which we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious Body.* Youth is obnoxious to many Temptations, especially in this sinful and corrupt Day wherein we live; and you need to have God for the Guide of your Youth, that you be not led into Temptation, but delivered from all Evil. And tho' you be young, yet your dying Day may be at the Door, and a Journey just before you through the dark Mountains, through the dark Valley and Shadow of Death. You therefore greatly need to have this God for your God for ever and ever, and to be your Guide even unto Death, and through Death, till he bring you to that Land where the Inhabitant shall not say I am sick, and the People thereof are forgiven their Iniquity.

8thly, It importeth, that young Men may have God for the Guide of their Youth, and may lay Claim to him in that Relation; *Wilt thou not from this Time cry to me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth?* Nothing doth dishonour him more, nothing doth offend him more, than that you do not in particular, and for yourselves, put in your Claim for his standing in that Relation to you, of a Father, and of the Guide of your Youth. Can you have a better Father than God? and can you have a better Guide, than a Father, for the Guide of your Youth? Your heavenly Father has in-

infinite Wisdom, and he is a God of infinite Power, and his Love to you is an infinite Love; and, are you not in a safe Custody by his infinite Power, and under a safe Conduct by infinite Wisdom and Love?

Young Men, it is the Voice of God to you, *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding; in all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy Paths.* The Psalmist said it, and do you say it likewise, thro' Grace; *O God, thou art my Trust from my Youth,* Psal. lxxi. 4, 5.

Depend on God in Christ, for Teaching, *Psal. lxxi. 14. I have been taught by thee from my Youth, and hitherto I have declared thy Works.* O how refreshing and instructing are the Lessons he has taught his People in their Youth! By one such Lesson you will know more of God, than by Hearing, and Reading, all the Days of your Life: To hear and to read are Means of his Institution, but they are ineffectual without the Teaching of his Spirit. By his Teaching, you will be enabled to declare his Wonders; his Wonders in the Works of Nature, in the Works of Creation and Providence; the Wonders of his Grace, and of his Love; the Wonders of his Mercy and Goodness to your Souls: *Come hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul.*

And his Teaching will be effectual to bring you to Christ, and to preserve you in Christ Jesus; for every one that hath heard, and learn'd of the Father, cometh to the Son: And it will fit you to bear his Yoke in your Youth, his

Yoke

Yoke of Obedience, and his Yoke of Suffering as he sees meet to call you to it, *Lam. iii. 27.*
It is good for a Man that he bear the Yoke in his Youth.

Thirdly, We now proceed to offer a few *Remarks* concerning the encouraging Promise of Grace, to enable us to put in our Claim to God as standing in the Relation of a Father in Christ unto us, who are fatherless, destitute Sinners of *Adam's* House. And,

1. We remark, That Adoption, and the Privilege of Sonship, is *Remarks.* one of the Blessings of the new Covenant. In the first Covenant, *Adam* was the Son of God by Creation; but in the new Covenant we become the Sons of God by Regeneration, by Adoption, and by Faith in Christ Jesus. The eternal Son of God is become the Son of Man, by his Incarnation; and thro' him, as the New-covenant Head, the Head of the Redeemed from among Men, we have Communion with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as our God and Father, in his Title and Right. And may we not, in a Transport of holy Wonder, cry out with the Apostle, *1 John iii. 1. Behold what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God!* The Spirit of Adoption, crying, *Abba Father*, is one of the Blessings of this Covenant of Promise. And it is an Article of this new Covenant, that the Prodigal Son shall see and be convinced of his lost Estate in the first Covenant; that his first Father *Adam* died, and left his Children fatherless; that

that we all sinned and died in him as a publick Person, and are therefore, considered in ourselves, both destitute and without Hope in the World, *Psal. xlv. 10. O Daughter, hearken, and incline thine Ear; forget thy Father's House, and thine own People.* Thy Father's House, the first *Adam's* Family, is a broken Houle; there is neither Food nor Clothing in it, nor any Sanctuary in it to protect perishing sinful Souls from the vindictive Wrath of God: But in Christ's Father's House there are many Mansions, and a Table is covered in it, to satiate every weary Soul, and to replenish every sorrowful Soul.

2. We remark, That there is an Almighty Efficacy in the Grace of God, conveyed to the Souls of Men through the Promise of the new Covenant; *Thou shalt call me, My Father.* Tho' God reveals himself as a Father in Christ; yet not one Soul would ever have cried to him, *Thou art my Father*, had not the Lord pledg'd his Faithfulness for it in the Promise; *I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father.* I, who am JEHOVAH, have said it; and what I have said shall be accomplished: I said it, who said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, when nothing but Darknels covered the Face of the Deep: I have said it, and therefore the Unbelief and Enmity of thy Heart, and all the Snares of the World, and Temptations of *Satan* combin'd against thy Soul, shall not be able to gainsay it: I have said it in a Way of Promise, and therefore thou shalt say it in a Way of Faith and Believing, *Thou art my Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth*: Thou shalt say, *Thou art my Father*; and shalt

shalt say it with the greatest Freedom of Choice and Election, and with the truest Kind of Liberty ; and, with a Jubilee running through thy whole Soul, thou shalt cry unto me, *Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.*

3. We may remark, That it is by the Spirit of the Son, and in the Right of the Son of God, the First-born from among many Brethren, that we can only say unto God, *Thou art my Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth,* Gal. iv. 6.

4. We remark, That it is for the Glory of God, that we call him, *My Father*, in Christ's Name, and in his Right and Title. God did never put any Thing in a Promise but it was for his own Honour and Glory ; and he has promised it, *Thou shalt call me, My Father.* But perhaps some may say, Is this Promise directed to me ? and is it for the Glory of God, that I in particular call him, *My Father* ? Yes, it is. The Promise is absolute, without any Condition or Limitation ; and it is directed to all who hear this everlasting Gospel, and therefore it is directed to you as well as to others. Your having a Bible put into your Hands, wherein this Word of Grace is recorded, is a full Warrant to you to believe it, and apply it to yourselves. It is a Word of Grace directed to lost Sinners, to those that are fatherless ; and you cannot deny that you are one of that Sort and Kind. It is, then, the Will of God, that you call him, *My Father*, in the Name of Christ ; for it is his Will, that his Promise be believed, and trusted unto. Nothing will please him so well as that you call him, *My Father*, in Christ

Jesus; and that you flee into the Embraces of his Love, thro' the Son of his Love, *Mat. iii.*

17. *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* God is well pleased with Christ, and with all those that are in Christ; and these who are in Christ are well pleased with Christ, and they are well pleased with God as he is in Christ: For God as he is in Christ is a reconciled God, and a merciful Father, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin; and he *rests in his Love.*

5. We remark, That we may depend upon the Promise of God for Grace to enable us to call him, *My Father.* The Promise looketh to you that cannot call him, *My Father; Thou shalt call me, My Father.* And it is one of the true Sayings of God, of him whose Name is Faithful and True: Thus saith the Lord, *Thou shalt call me, My Father.* It is not from any good Disposition in you, but from Grace and Love in me; and it is not from any Power and Ability in you, but from my Faithfulness in the Promise, and from my Almighty Power to accomplish it, that *thou shalt call me, My Father.* And Heaven itself as it were is wrapt up in this Promise, *Thou shalt call me, My Father;* that is, Thou shalt know me to be JEHOVAH, to be a God in Christ, and shalt call me *Father;* thou shalt know my Name as it is in Christ, know my Mercy, my Love and Grace, in *Christ Jesus;* and thou shalt choose me for thy God and Portion, and call me, *My Father;* thou shalt trust in me for Grace and Glory, for the upper and nether Springs, and call me, *My Father;* thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, honour

nour and serve me with Reverence and godly Fear, and call me, *My Father*; and thy Heart shall be circumcised to love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart; and thou shalt be enabled to depend upon me for every Thing thou dost need, from the Shoes Latchet to the great Salvation, and to come to me daily with all thy Wants and Complaints, as a Child to his Father, able and ready to help him; for, *Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not depart from me*; but thou shalt live and die about my Hand; and, waiting thus on the Lord, *thou shalt renew thy Strength, and mount up with Wings as Eagles*; *thou shalt walk and not weary, and thou shalt run and not faint.*

We now proceed to make some Application of this Doctrine; and, in the first Place, in a Way of *Examination* and Trial. And,

I. These who have taken Hold of God's Covenant of Promise, have seen themselves to be in a sinful and miserable State by the Breach of the first Covenant: You have seen that the Variance betwixt God and you is very great, and that the Quarrel is running very high: You have been made to approve of, and rely upon, God's Method of Salvation; accounting it a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom you are chief: You have renounced all other Confidences, and you depend upon the Mediation of the Lord Jesus in all your Approaches to God; and you have a daily Correspondence with him, as appearing in the Presence of God for us, coming to him with

with all your Wants to be supplied, with all your Plagues to be healed, and with all your Sins to be pardoned.

2. You will have a deliberate Complacency in the Covenant of Promise. As we shew ourselves the Children of the first *Adam*, by the natural Bent to the Covenant of Works; so the believing Soul has a Liking and Relish of the new Covenant proposed in the Gospel, and faith of it, *It is all my Salvation, and all my Desire*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

3. How do you please the Way of Holding in this Covenant, an Holding of Grace, and Holding upon what Christ has done? Doth the Grant and Disposition of the new Covenant please you well, so that you delight to hold all in the Redeemer's Right, and to cry through him, *Thou art my Father, the Rock of my Salvation*? How stand you affected to the New-covenant Head? Do you glory in him only? *Isa. i. 45*, last. And, do you rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no Confidence in the Flesh? *Phil. iii. 3*. And, do your Hearts sometimes burn with Love to an unseen Saviour? and, is he to you the *Plant of Renown*, the *Pearl of great Price*, and *more excellent than all the Mountains of Prey*? And, do you look upon yourselves as bankrupt Creatures? And, are you well pleased that he has all your Stock in his Hand, and that in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge? for *they shall hang upon him all the Glory of his Father's House, and all the Vessels of greater and smaller Quantity*. The great End and Design of the new Covenant, which is to glorify God, to honour

honour Christ, and to abase Self, is relished with Complacency by all the spiritual Seed of *Abraham*; they see Grace in it, Mercy in it, Wisdom and Love in it, and Heaven dawning in it; there is nothing in this Covenant they would have out of it, and there is nothing out of the Covenant they would have in it, and they rejoice in it, as *well ordered in all Things and sure.*

4. The Righteousness of Christ, the New-covenant Head, will be the only Ground of your Confidence, *Phil. iii. 7, 8.* you will desire to be found in him, having that Righteousness which is by the Faith of Christ; and this you will rejoice and glory in, that his Name is, *The Lord our Righteousness.* The eternal Son of God, in the Covenant, consented to become Man, and to be the federal Head and Representative of an elect World, *Isa. xlii. 1. Psal. lxxxix. 19.* The Breach between God and Man was greater than to be done away by one travelling between Parties at Variance, to reconcile them with bare Words: There could be no Covenant of Peace betwixt God and Sinners, without Reparation of Damages done to the Honour of God thro' Sin, and without honouring the Law by an exact Obedience; and the Son of God said, *Lo! I come,* *Psal. xl. 7.* I put myself in their Room and Law-place, as the second *Adam*, to do both these, in the Obedience of my Life, and in the Sufferings of my Death. And let us here adore the Condescension of the Son of God in becoming Man, Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief!

Thus,

Thus, he condescended to be brought into the Rank and Order of Creatures, who is *over all God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. He condescended to come into the Rank of inferior Creatures, to take the Nature of Man, and not the Nature of the Angels, *Heb. ii. 16.* And he assumed the human Nature after it was blasted by Sin, and wither'd with the Curse; for he took on him *the Likeness of sinful Flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. so that, tho' he was not a Sinner, yet he looked like one. And, by this Assumption and his Incarnation, his Deity was veiled, and his Glory eclipsed, *Phil. ii. 6, 7.* for he humbled himself, and made himself of no Reputation, that he might glorify God upon the Earth, and that in his Righteousness we might be exalted.

And the eternal Son of God condescended to be the federal Head and Representative of an elect World, to transact in their Name, *Isa. xlii. 1. Psal. lxxxix. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 47.* The holy One of God represented wretched Sinners; the Beloved of the Father represented the sinful Company. And hence the Righteousness of Christ is not imputed to his People represented by him, in its Effects only, (which is no proper Imputation at all) so as their Faith, Repentance and sincere Obedience are therefore accepted as their evangelical Righteousness, on which they are justified; but Christ's Righteousness is imputed to them in itself, even as *Adam's Sin* was imputed to his Posterity: For Christ obeyed and suffered as a publick Person in the Room and Law-stead of his People represented

presented by him; even as *Adam* sinned as a publick Person, and his Posterity sinned in him, and fell with him, *Rom. v. 12, 19. Rom viii. 3.* And hence the Covenant of Grace is absolute, and not conditional to us; for, it being made with Christ as Representative, the Condition of it was laid upon him, and fulfilled by him in his everlasting Righteousness.

We now proceed to an Use of *Exhortation.* And we solemnly exhort you, whether young or old, and that in the Name of the eternal God, and in the Name of his Son Christ Jesus our Lord, That you, and every one of you that shall read these Lines, do personally, and for yourselves, embrace and take hold of God's Covenant of Promise. Take hold of it as left to you: For there is a Promise left you of entering into God's Rest; beware lest you come short of it, *Heb. iv. 1.* And the Promise is given to you and to your Children, to be believed and trusted to, and applied by you, *Acts ii. 39, 40.* And this will be your Condemnation, if you reject the Counsel of God against your own Souls.

When the Soul gets a saving Discovery of God as he is in Christ, it is not one Blessing that attends it, but a Multitude of Blessings, even all the sure Mercies of *David: Acquaint thyself now with God, and be at Peace with him, and thereby Good shall come unto thee.* You cannot know God until you see him in Christ; and, since God is in Christ, you may now, without Delay, acquaint yourself with God: And if once you are acquainted with
M God,

God, and know him and see him, as he is in Christ, you cannot but be at Peace with him; for you will see him, as he is in Christ, *reconciling the World unto himself*; you will see him to be Love, 1 John iv. 10. And, seeing him to be Love, you will love him, who first loved you; and, loving him, you will be at Peace with him, who is *the God of Peace, who brought again from the Dead the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, by the Blood of the everlasting Covenant*. And the first Sight you see of God, as he is in Christ, will draw your Heart unto him with Cords of Love; and that Day will be the Day of the first Visit of the Day-spring from on high to thy Soul, the Day of thy Espousals unto Christ, and of thy Conversion unto God. And this will be the Day of God's working in thy Heart the Work of Faith with Power, and of his betrothing thee unto himself for ever, in Faithfulness, and in Righteousness, in Loving-kindness, and in tender Mercies.

If the Question be moved, What is it to take hold of the Covenant of Promise? We answer, That the Way to take hold of the Covenant, or the Way to enter personally into the Covenant of Grace, is to unite to Christ the New-covenant Head by Faith. And may a Day of the Mediator's Power accompany any small Endeavours that are made, to speak of the Mystery of Faith, in the believing Application of the Promise of God's Covenant! It will be Matter of the most mournful Lamentation, if the Ark of the Covenant be opened unto you in the Gospel, and not one shelterless

Soul of *Adam's* Family flee into it for Refuge.

It is only under the Influence of the Holy Spirit, that you can personally come into the Covenant, *Isa.* xlv. 4. & xlv. 24. And you come personally into the Covenant made with Christ the second *Adam*, by the following Steps; (1.) Thro' the Grace of the Divine Spirit, you are to be convinced of it, to see and believe, that you are lost, ruined and undone in *Adam*, by his breaking the first Covenant as a federal Head and a publick Person, *Rom.* v. 12, 19. *1 Cor.* xv. 22. And, (2.) That by Nature you are wholly corrupted, averſe to Good, and prone to Evil, *Gen.* vi. 5. (3.) That by Nature you are under the Curse of the broken Law, and bound over to the revenging Wrath of God, *Gal.* iii. 10. (4.) That you are utterly unable to help yourselves out of this Gulf of Sin and Miſery into which you are plunged, *Ezek.* xvi. 4, 5, 6. (5.) Believe that there is a Covenant of Grace, for the Relief of lost Sinners, established between God essentially considered, and the Lord Jesus as the Head of the Redeemed from among Men, or, between the Father as representing the Deity, and his eternal Son as the second *Adam*, wherein the Lord Jesus undertook to fulfil all Righteousness as a publick Person, and the Father contracted to bestow all Blessings upon that Account; and that this Covenant of Grace is a free and an absolute Covenant, and not conditional as to you; for, the Covenant being made with Christ as Representative, the Conditions of the Covenant were laid upon him, and fulfilled by him, in and by his holy Birth, his righteous Life, and satisfactory Death, *Psal.* lxxxix. throughout. (6.) Believe

lieve that the Covenant of Grace, fulfilled in the Condition of it by Christ the New-covenant Head, and certainly to be fulfilled in its Promise, is, in Christ crucified, really offer'd to you in particular, in the Gospel; and that you are called to the Fellowship of it, in him: For, *To you is the Word of this Salvation sent; and, The Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,* Acts ii. 39. and xiii. 26. (7.) Believe on the Name of Christ crucified, offered and exhibited to you in particular, as the Lord our Righteousness, as the great High Priest of our Profession, ordained for Men, and who hath made Reconciliation for the Sins of the People, and is the End of the Law for Righteousness. *To him give all the Prophets witness, that thro' his Name, whosoever believeth in his Name, shall receive the Remission of Sins.* (8.) Believe in him, and devote yourselves unto him, and worship him as the King of Zion, and Governor among the Nations. Harken unto him as your Prophet; and, in his Strength, resign yourselves in Soul and Body, and all you have, unto him, to be taught by his Word and Spirit, ruled by his Laws, and disposed of by his Providence; to be his Disciple and Spouse, his Servant and Follower, *Isa. xlv. 4, 5.* and, thro' his Grace, renounce all other Lords and Lovers, *Hos. xiv. 4, 5, 8.* and pass yourselves into the Redeemer's Right, to be rescued from Sin and Satan, from the present evil World, and from Death, Hell and the Grave. You may trust in him as King in Zion for Sanctification; for he is an Heart-conquering and a Sin-subduing Lord: *He will subdue our Iniqui-*

Iniquities, and will cast all our Sins in the Depths of the Sea, Mic. vii. 19. (9.) Thro' Christ, believe in God, as thy God and Father, in his Title and Right, Psal. lxxxix. 26. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation. And believe in and depend upon the Holy Ghost, as thy Sanctifier, Comforter, Teacher and Remembrancer, 1 Cor. vi. 19. John xiv. 26. and xv. 26, 27.

To Day, if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts. The Word of Exhortation speaketh unto you, as unto Children; My Son, give me thy Heart. Come with me from Lebanon, my Spouse, with me from Lebanon. — Also the Son of the Stranger, that taketh hold of my Covenant, and joineth himself to the Lord, to love the Name of the Lord; him will I bring to my holy Mountain, and your Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine Altar, Isa. lvi. 6.

1st, Consider, that it has been the Practice of all the Saints, in all Ages, *Motives.* to come personally into the Bond of the Covenant. *Thomas saith, Thou art my Lord, and my God; and the Church doth put in her Claim to the Covenant-relation, The Lord is my Portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him, Lam. iii. 24. See also Psal. xvi. 2. and lxxiii. 25, 27. 2^{dly}, Consider, it is a Business no other Person can do for you, if by Grace you do not personally come into the Bond of the Covenant for yourself. The Parent cannot do it for the Child, nor the Husband for the Wife, Jer. ix. 25. Mat. viii. 11, 12. Amos ix. 3^{dly}, The Call to come into the Bond of the Covenant is personal, directed to every Man who*

who hears the Gospel; *Unto you, I call, O Men*, Prov. viii. 4. And the Answer of Faith to the Call must therefore be personal; *When thou saidst, Seek ye my Face, my Heart said, Thy Face, Lord, will I seek. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength*, Psal. xxvii. 8. Isa. xlv. 23. & xlv. 4. 4^{thly}, Consider, this is the Season of coming personally into the Bond of the Covenant; it is the Season of Youth with some of you, and it is good to bear his Yoke in your Youth. The Lord appeared to *Solomon*, at *Gibeon*, in his Youth; and *Obadiah* feared the Lord from his Youth. It is the Voice of the Son of God to you, *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me*, Prov. viii. 17. It is a Time of Backsliding and Defection with us all, for we have forsaken the Lord God of our Fathers; and therefore it is a Season wherein we ought to say, *I will go and return to my first Husband; for it was better with me then, than it is now*: And it is encouraging for us to return, that *the Lord, the God of Israel, hateth putting away*. And it is a Time of threatened Judgments, and therefore a proper Season for taking hold of God's Covenant; for when the Decree bringeth forth, and the Day of the Lord's Controversy approacheth, there will be no Safety but in the Ark of the Covenant.

As for *Directions*, I shall only say, (1.) That you are to take hold of the Covenant of Promise, in an humble and confident Dependence upon the Grace and Strength of our Lord Jesus Christ, without whom you can do nothing; depending upon a promising God, and upon the Holy Spirit, who is the Love of God, and the

Holy Spirit of Promise, *Isa. xlv. 5. & xlv. 24. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. John. xv. 4, 5. & John i. 16.* (2.) You are to take hold of it cordially ; *For with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness* ; and, *Psal. xvi. 2.* The Psalmist saith, *O my Soul, thou hast said unto Jehovah, Thou art my Lord.* (3.) You are to take hold of the Covenant with Judgment and solid Consideration, and not by a mere Flash of Affection, *Hos. ii. 19. I will betrothe thee unto me in Judgment.* And, (4.) You are to take hold of the Covenant speedily, and without Delay : For the Master is come, and calleth for you ; and blessed are you who are called to the Marriage-supper of the Lamb. It is the Voice of God to you this very Day ; *I will say, It is my People ; and they shall say, The Lord is my God, Zech. xiii. 9.* And tho' you find not that Enlargement which you would wish to attain unto ; yet, if your Doubting and Averseness be your Burden, as they are your Sin ; do you essay and endeavour to say it in the Strength of Grace, tho' it should be with stammering Lips, *The Lord is my God* : For this was *Jacob's* Language at *Bethel*, in the Day of his Youth, and in the Day of his Distress, when he fled from the Face of *Esau* his Brother, *The Lord shall be my God.*

I shall conclude with recommending it to you, to meditate frequently upon the betrothing Love of *Christ*, and upon the Decease which he accomplished at *Jerusalem*.

1st, Meditate frequently upon the betrothing Love of *Christ*. God, in the new Covenant, has revealed himself as a betrothing God. The Son

Son of God has betrothed and married our Nature to himself in a personal and hypostatical Union, and we may therefore with Confidence venture upon his Grace and Good-will toward Men: And the Lord *Jesus Christ* has promised to betrothe Sinners of *Adam's House* to himself in a Way of free and sovereign Grace, *Hos. ii. 19, 20. I will betrothe thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in Loving-kindness, and in Mercies. I will even betrothe thee unto me in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* The Lord *Jesus Christ* has taken his betrothing Love, and wrap'd it up in a Covenant of Promise; and he has indorsed or directed the Promise to Sinners, that the sinful Sons of Men may trust it, and that none may fear that they are excluded from a Warrant to trust to and venture upon the Grace and Love of Christ.

The Persons betrothed are Sinners of *Adam's House*; the glorious infinite Person betrothing is the great *God our Saviour*: And it is a most comfortable and blessed Betrothing betwixt Sinners and a Saviour; betwixt dead Sinners, and him who is the Resurrection and the Life; betwixt blind benighted Souls, and him who is the Light of the World, the Light of the upper Paradise, and the Day-spring from on high; betwixt diseased, polluted Sinners, and him who is the Lord that healeth us, even *Jesus*, who loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood; and betwixt guilty bankrupt Sinners and him who is *JEHOVAH* our Righteousness, in whom God is to be found as reconciling

the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them. Hearken therefore, and consider it, ye Children of Men, forget your Father's House, the House of the first *Adam*; and forgo all hold of the first Covenant (for, that Covenant being broken, the whole Family is undone and ruined) and come and be espoused to the Lord Jesus, the New-covenant Head, the betrothing Head of the Redeemed from among Men; *So shall the King greatly desire your Beauty*, Psal. xlv. 10.

Consider, that the betrothing Head of the Redeem'd is *fair and altogether lovely*, Psal. xlv. 1. *Song* v. 10, 16. his Riches are unsearchable Riches of Grace and of Glory, *Eph.* iii. 8. Consider his dying Love, that he was slain, that he might redeem you to God by his Blood, and that he might redeem you from this present evil World, and redeem you from all Iniquity, *Rev.* v. 9. *Gal.* i. 3, 4. *Tit.* ii. 14. He is the Judge of the Quick and the Dead, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, and the First-begotten of the Dead, who is willing to betrothe dying Clay to himself, that he may give you a glorious Immortality with himself, that, when Christ who is your Life shall appear, ye may also appear with him in Glory.

Lift up your Heads then, O ye everlasting Doors of the Souls of Men, by an hearty *Amen* of Faith to the Promise of Christ, *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever*; and thus the King of Glory doth and shall come in, and sup with you, and ye with him, *Psal.* xxiv. 6. *Rev.* iii. 10.

2dly, Meditate frequently upon the Decease which the Lord of Glory accomplished at *Jerusalem*,

rusalem, Luke ix. 30, 31. And behold, there talked with him two Men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in Glory, and spake of his Decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

It is necessary in your meditating upon the Decease the Lord of Glory accomplished at *Jerusalem*, that you be under the Influence of the Spirit of Glory. Moses and Elias appeared in Glory, and talked of his Decease; they had a Noon-tide of the Light of Glory, of the Spirit of Glory upon them: And, unless a Twilight Glimpse of that Glory beam in upon your Hearts, you will neither think nor talk to Purpose of the Decease he accomplished at *Jerusalem*.

It is the highest and most sublime Subject of the Regions of Glory, to think and talk of the Decease he accomplished at *Jerusalem*: There will be Use of Speech in Heaven, and there will be a Voice of Tongues about the Throne; and their Talk will be of the Decease which he accomplished at *Jerusalem*.

His Decease was his Death, his Exit or Departure. The Departure of *Israel* out of *Egypt* to *Canaan* is called their Exit or *Exodus*, the same Word used here: And his Decease was, like their Departure, accompanied by a bloody Attack upon him by all the Hosts of Hell; and he went through a Red-sea of Suffering, and of vindictive Wrath, making Peace by the Blood of his Cross. His Decease was the Subject of Discourse upon Mount *Tabor*; a Subject that was most delightful to our Lord himself, and most refreshing to Moses and Elias: Tho' they had

had come down locally from the Place of Heaven, yet their Bliss and Beatitude was the very same; for they had the Presence of Christ; and, appearing in Glory, they talked of his Decease, which was the great Theme of the Inhabitants of the upper House, and it was the Fountain and Spring of all their Glory and Felicity. The highest Stile of Language in Heaven is the Decease our Lord accomplished at *Jerusalem*! We have no nice elaborate Discourse that *Moses* and *Elias* made upon the Mount: No; it was in a few Words, massy, lofty and sublime, *The Decease he should accomplish at Jerusalem*! It was the Burden of the Song of the Redeem'd; they brought this highest Note down with them to the Earth: For, when Angels and Saints about the Throne have enlarged their Thoughts and Contemplations, and bended their Faculties to the uttermost, and soared as high as their weak Heads can allow them, they are just obliged to issue their Song where they began; *O mysterious, ineffable and divine is that Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the Flesh, accomplishing his Decease at Jerusalem*! The Glory of Heaven just centres in the Death he accomplished at *Jerusalem*; we do not hear of another Word from *Moses* and *Elias*, when they appeared in Glory upon Mount *Tabor*, but that they talked of the *Decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem*!

You are to meditate upon the Glory of the Person of Christ, who accomplished his Decease at *Jerusalem*. He is Lord of all, the Lord of Glory: *If the Princes of this World had known it, they would not have crucified the*

Lord of Glory. He is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, the Prince of Life; *But ye killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the Dead,* Acts iii. 15. He is the King of Glory, the God of Glory, who appeared to Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran. He is **J E H O V A H**, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, who spake to Moses, Exod. iii. from the burning Bush at Horeb. And his Name is *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father*, Isa. ix. 6. and yet his Name is called **J E S U S**, because *he saveth his People from their Sins.*

You are to meditate upon the Grounds and Reasons of the Decease he accomplished at *Jerusalem*. It was for the Glory of God in Man's Salvation, *John* xvii. 3, 4. It was for the Glory of the Holiness, Majesty and Justice of God; of the Grace, Mercy and Love of God: It was to *finish the Transgression, to make an End of Sin, to bring in an everlasting Righteousness, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity;* and it was because of his Love to Men, and for the Salvation of the Souls of Men, *Rev.* i. 5. *Eph.* v. 1.

You are to meditate upon the Nature and Quality of his Death and Decease which he accomplished at *Jerusalem*. He accomplished his Decease in a publick Capacity; he took our Nature into an intimate and personal Union with himself, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. *John* i. 14. he substitute himself in our Room and Law-place, and he suffered as a publick Person, *bearing our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, and giving his*
Life

Life a Ransom for many. His Death and Decease was early spoken of and promised, Gen. iii. 15. it was testified of by all the Prophets, and it was expected and looked for by all the Old-Testament Saints, and seen by them afar off. In his Decease he did bear our Grievs, our Sins, our Shame, and our Sorrows. It was an ignominious and a cursed Death, and yet a triumphant and a victorious Death; for he *spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly on the Cross, triumphing over them in it.* His Death it was a necessary Death; Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and to enter into his Glory? And it was an acceptable and a savoury Death; *Walk in Love, as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us, an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling Savour,* Eph. v. 2.

You are to meditate upon the pleasant Fruits and Effects of the Decease which he accomplished at *Jerusalem.* He has reconciled us to God by his Death, and we have Boldness to enter into the Holiest of all by the Blood of Jesus. The Lamb slain has opened the seven Seals; he has opened the Gates of Paradise, the Fountain of Life, and the Treasures of Grace; he has opened up and revealed the Counsels and Purposes of God's Love, that were hid in a Mystery; and he has opened the Understandings of Men to see the Wonders of his Grace, Mercy and Love in the Covenant of Promise. He was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his Blood; he hath glorified God upon the Earth, and finished the Work he gave him to do; *He said, It is finished, and bowed his Head, and gave*

gave up the Ghost. It was the Purpose of the Wisdom and Love of God, to gather his greatest Revenue of Glory from the Salvation of Sinners of *Adam's* Family, that deserved to be in Hell; and what a wonderful Thought and Meditation is it, that the Cross and Death of the Lord of Glory should be the great Mean of the Glory of God in Man's Salvation! The most wonderful Sight in Heaven is *the Lamb in the Midst of the Throne, as it were slain*; and the greatest Homage and Worship God ever received was in *Golgotha*, when Christ, tho' a Son, learned Obedience, and humbled himself, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross!

And you are to meditate upon that holy Joy, that Willingness and Cheerfulness, with which he accomplished his Decease at *Jerusalem*. This was the Subject with which he entertained *Moses* and *Elias* in Mount *Tabor*. He rejoiced in the habitable Parts of the Earth, and his Delights were with the Sons of Men; he said, *Lo, I come a Body hast thou prepared me*, that is, an human Nature, to obey in, to suffer, and to die in for the Remission of the Sins of many. He spake frequently of his Decease all along; he preached it to *Nicodemus*, John iii. 14. he went to *Jerusalem*, with holy Resolution, at the last Passover; *he went all the Way journeying to Jerusalem*; he was the first in the Company when he went to *Jerusalem*, to accomplish his Decease, as to a Triumph, accompanied by the *Hosannas* of the Multitude: He long'd for the last Passover; *With Desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you, before I suffer*: And

he long'd for his bloody Baptism; *I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?* He went singing to his Work of Suffering; *he did sing an Hymn, and went out to the Mount of Olives.* But, what shall we say? for Time would fail, and Eternity itself will be too short, to speak of his Glory, and of the Wonders of his dying Love, who accomplished his Decease at *Jerusalem: Lo, these are Part of his Ways; and how small a Part of him is known or heard!* What can we think? or, what can we say? but that our Thoughts are swallowed up, and that Expression doth fail us, while we contemplate and behold the infinite Evil of Sin, the inexorable Justice of God, and his infinite Holiness in the Death and Sufferings of the Lord of Glory, who was crucified in *Calvary*; and that we must for ever adore the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge; and may we add, that we hope, thro' the Grace of our Lord Jesus, to spend an intire Eternity, in beholding *the Lamb, as it were slain, in the Midst of the Throne*; and that we shall, in a Transport of Love, Wonder, and Praise, delightfully meditate upon, and with *Moses and Elias*, the Prophets and Angels of the Lamb, and the Martyrs of Jesus, walk together of *the Decease he accomplished at Jerusalem!* And thus *shall we be ever with the Lord.*

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